The UNESCO Courier

A window open on the world

March 1975 (28th year) 2.80 French francs

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

International Women's Year

TREASURES OF WORLD ART

97

Egypt

She soars to conquer

Arms uplifted like wings, this painted pottery figure of a woman, fashioned some 6,000 years ago by an artist of the Nile Valley, seems poised to soar into flight. It was found in a tomb of one of the earliest prehistoric cultures of ancient Egypt, the so-called Amratian Period, and is barely 30 cm high. The figure's movement could well express the vigour of women today, who are seeking to free themselves from the constraints and discriminations placed upon them by society.

Photo © Brooklyn Museum (U.S.A.). From " Les Grandes Dames de l'Archéologie ", by Henri-Paul Eydoux, Editions Plon, Paris, 1964.

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SPECIAL NOTICE

This issue of the UNESCO COURIER (March 1975) has been published with considerable delay because of a strike at our Paris printers. Publication of our April issue will also be seriously delayed for the same reason. We ask our readers' indulgence for these delays and the consequent late delivery of both issues. We sincerely hope that the disruption in our printing and distribution schedules can be reduced to a minimum for subsequent issues.

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Photo Unesco - Peter Larsen

Cover

Women in the majority of countries still face discrimination in most branches of higher education. This is revealed by a recent Unesco study on international trends in higher education, some of whose findings are published in this issue devoted to International Women's Year (see pages 11 and 18). Our photo shows detail of a vast mural in the "House of Arts" of the University of Concepcion, Chile. Entitled "Presence of Latin America", it is by the Mexican painter Jorge Gonzalez Camarena.

Layout and design for this issue have been specially executed by a young French woman graphic artist, Claude Verne, of Paris.

WOMEN'S LIB

30 years of progress

Photo WHO - Raghu Rai

The United Nations has proclaimed 1975 International Women's Year in order to promote new efforts throughout the world in the struggle to end discrimination against women. This issue of the "Unesco Courier" is entirely devoted to this problem. It opens with the article below by Mrs. Helvi Sipilä, Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs at the United Nations and Secretary-General for International Women's Year. Mrs. Sipilä, the highest-ranking woman staff member of the U.N. Secretariat, reviews the progress accomplished in the last 30 years but also points out what still needs to be done before women can fully participate in social, political, economic and cultural life in every country on completely equal terms with men. The "Unesco Courier" intends to devote its August-September 1975 double issue to other aspects of this question.

by Helvi L. Sipilä

SINCE the U.N. began in 1945 a great deal has been done to improve the situation and status of women in the world. Particularly in the legal field, much has been and is being done to accord women equal rights with men in political, economic, social and family life. Age-old traditions, attitudes and practices are still, however, slow to change and the gap between law and reality still remains very wide.

In the political field, for example, ▶

Photo © Terry Buchanan, London

HELVI L. SIPILÄ, *of Finland, is in addition to her functions at the United Nations indicated above, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference for International Women's Year which will be held in Mexico City between June 19 and July 4, 1975. A lawyer, Mrs. Sipilä has played a leading part in the work of Finnish government committees dealing with matrimonial legislation and the protection of children. She was President of the International Federation of Women Lawyers (1954-56), Chairman of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women (1967), and since 1970 she has been Vice-President of the International Council of Women.*

▶ whereas in 1945 women were denied the right to vote in approximately one third of the U.N.'s 51 Member States, today women are legally eligible to vote in all elections and to stand for election on equal terms with men in 124 Member Nations. Yet, the percentage of women holding policy-making posts in the local, national and international areas still remains strikingly small.

In New Zealand, for example, which was the first nation in the world to grant women the vote in 1893, 92 per cent of the candidates and 95 per cent of those elected in the last elections (1972) were men. In Egypt, in 1967, 76 per cent of women failed to vote. The highest percentages of political participation in national legislatures are reported in the U.S.S.R. (35 per cent) and Finland (21.5 per cent).

At the international level, the picture is equally dismal. In the 28th U.N. General Assembly (1973), for example, there were only 180 women compared to 2,369 men delegates. There were no women in the delegations of 55 countries and only one woman in the delegations of 44 countries.

In the economic field, considerable progress has been made in the past 25 years. In 1945 women's right to work and to equal conditions of work (including the thorny question of equal pay for work of equal value) was hardly discussed, even in the International Labour Organization. Today, these questions are fully accepted as "rights" to be recognized and implemented in practice, albeit progressively and at a very slow pace.

A number of ILO instruments, especially the 1951 Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for work of equal value and the 1958 Convention on discrimination in employment and occupation have been landmarks in this process of achieving public acceptance of these rights.

Nevertheless women, who constitute about 562 million workers or 34 per cent of the world's labour force (38 per cent for the developed, 32 per cent for developing countries) are mainly concentrated in a limited number of jobs, frequently at low levels of skills and responsibilities with equally low wages or salaries.

Their work is often not recognized in practice as being of equal value to men's work and their pay for the same job is often lower. And these figures do not take into account the millions of women who are toiling from morning till night as unpaid subsistence farm or domestic workers. There are no statistics to tell us how many women live in such circumstances, nor the extent of their economic output and return.

Statistical data on wage differentials of men and women in the various sectors and occupations are very inadequate, but ILO studies suggest that even in many industrialized countries

The stylized dove presented on these two pages is the emblem chosen by the United Nations for International Women's Year.
The emblem was designed by Valerie Pettis, a graphic artist in the studio of Henry Dreyfuss Associates, New York.

women's wages are about 50 to 80 per cent of men's for the same work time..

The concentration of women in lower ranking positions is found even in the United Nations Secretariat, where approximately 80 per cent of the General Service staff, but only 20 per cent of professional staff, are women.

As regards education, while few today would deny women's right to be educated equally with men, women remain in many countries seriously disadvantaged at every level—primary, secondary and at the higher level.

Particularly in the developed world, some progress has been made through educational measures to eliminate prejudice and discriminatory attitudes based on the stereotyping of sex roles. Changes have included curriculum reform, greater flexibility in the choice of subjects for both boys and girls (both, for example, are now studying the same amount of mathematics, sciences and home economics in some countries) and both are being educated in sex and family life.

Whatever illiteracy prevails, however, the percentage of illiterate females is always higher than that of males. In 1960 the illiteracy rates were 33.5 per cent for men and 44.9 per cent for women. By 1970 these were 28.0 per cent and 40.3 per cent, respectively. In Africa and the Arab States which have the highest rates, the female illiteracy rate dropped from 88.5 to 83.7 per cent and from 90.7 to 85.7 per cent, respectively, in the same decade.

Despite the fact that special efforts have been made in many countries to provide adult literacy classes, a much lower ratio of women than men continue to enroll. This is due mainly to such factors as distance from schools, impracticability of travelling by night, household chores, early marriage, outmoded attitudes and sheer lack of adequate facilities to service the number of illiterate persons.

Access to education of girls and women in different parts of the world also depends on the level of general development of a country. But even in industrialized countries, where primary education is compulsory, differences in curricula, in teaching methods and in subjects available to girls and boys continue to exist. One of the results is the preponderance of women in the labour force in certain fields and their small or complete lack of representation in other fields.

The element of choice may be theoretically present but to a large extent the "choice" is induced by sex-biased education which begins in early childhood. Clearly differential treatment exists equally with regard to vocational training and this leads to different opportunities in employment and occupations, different salaries, wages and occupational hierarchies, no matter what principles of equality exist in law.

The trend towards the improvement of the legal position of women has accelerated markedly in recent years, and the principle of equal rights of men and women has now been recognized and written into the basic laws of many countries. While, in some instances, formal legal equality has existed since the early part of this century (e.g. Nordic and Eastern European countries), in most cases major changes have taken place only since 1945.

In the field of civil law, however, and especially family law, the principle of equality has not yet won universal acceptance although there have been noticeable trends in that direction in recent years. Recent or current reforms have done away with legislation which was discriminatory against women and several countries have enacted laws with the aim of achieving a more equitable sharing of rights and responsibilities within the family.

Laws enacted in some countries (e.g. Brazil, France, the Ivory Coast, Luxembourg, Monaco) in the past two decades reveal, for example, discernible trends toward a more even-handed partnership of the spouses in decision-making; towards a more equitable sharing, based on the earning ability of each, of the assets acquired during marriage at the time the marriage is dissolved (e.g. Austria, Canada [various provinces], France, Monaco); towards the recognition of the work of the housewife as a contribution to the assets of the family, assets which should be shared by the spouses (or their heirs) at the dissolution of marriage (e.g. Eastern European countries, and in the United Kingdom [since 1970]).

Some countries, which had not previously done so, adopted legislation recognizing the inheritance rights of the surviving spouse (e.g. France), and equal parental rights and duties, the interest of the child being the paramount consideration. The latter included the granting of full status as a parent to the unmarried mother (e.g. Austria, Sweden).

The laws of various countries governing divorce have been liberalized to some extent. Divorce is now permitted in countries where previously it was not recognized, e.g. Italy (since 1974), Monaco (since 1970). In Afghanistan (since 1971) the wife now has the legal right to divorce under certain conditions, whereas formerly, it was the exclusive privilege of the husband. In other countries, divorce has been made much easier for both spouses than previously (e.g., Sweden, the United States of America [State of New York]).

In many countries, however, the husband is still recognized in law as the "head of the family" and plays the dominant role in the marriage relationship, the wife being relegated to an inferior position with little or no legal say in decisions affecting herself and other members of the family.

The laws of some of these countries may stipulate that the wife owes obedience to her husband (e.g. Ethiopia, Jordan, Mali, Tunisia). She may need the authorization of her husband or the court to exercise her legal capacity to contract, sue and be sued (e.g. Ecuador, Haiti, Mexico, the Philippines, Uruguay). Her property rights may be limited under the rules governing the property relations of the spouses. Her right to work may be subject to the express or implied authorization of her husband (e.g. Burundi, Ecuador [only to engage in trade or industry], Mali [to engage in trade]). In other countries, however, the law requires that the wife owe obedience to her husband.

Despite the fact that modern legislative trends increasingly recognize the importance of women's employment outside the home, from the viewpoint of overall economic development as well as personal or family need, the role of homemaker is still assigned primarily to the woman, not only through tradition and social custom but also in some instances in law, and she is expected to perform that role without financial compensation during marriage. This may be explicitly formulated in the law or implied in various legal provisions concerning maintenance of the wife and of the family's expenses when these are the main responsibility of the husband.

This problem is of major importance in considering ways to increase opportunities for women to participate in gainful employment and development. Governments and government planners in some countries have begun to realize that functions should be more equitably divided between the sexes so that both may have practical opportunities to participate in parenthood and in employment.

It is also being gradually recognized that policies which attempt to give women an equal place with men in economic life, while at the same time confirming women's traditional responsibility for the care of the home and children, have no prospect of fulfilling the first of these aims.

There is one field in which equality does not arise, but in which the needs and rights of women obviously need protection, and that is maternity. Because of the lack of women's participation in the formulation of policies in the field of health, their special needs for the protection of maternity are often not even known to the decision-makers. This is, therefore, one of the most neglected fields of health care in many countries. Although the availability of health services largely depends on the resources and personnel available, much could be achieved by inexpensive training in health, nutrition and home economics as preventive health services.

In all our efforts to improve the quality of life of all human beings, too little attention is paid to the needs of millions of children and mothers, especially in the developing areas, rural as well as urban. How can we improve the quality of life of a human being born to an illiterate, economically dependent, malnourished, and overburdened woman, whose health may leave much to be desired and who gives birth to one child per year?

International Women's Year 1975 gives all of us a unique opportunity to focus attention on eliminating these still pervasive discriminations against women, thereby enabling women to more fully participate and contribute to the economic, social and political life of our planet.

The significance of the Year will be what we make of it. It could be a truly historic year—a landmark not only in the history of women's advancement but also in the advancement of humanity as a whole. Let us all work to make it so.

■ ***Helvi L. Sipilä***

1691 UNITED STATES. Women have the vote in the State of Massachusetts. They later lost this right in 1780.

1788 FRANCE. The French philosopher and politician Condorcet demands for women the right to education, to participate in politics, to employment.

1792 UNITED KINGDOM. The pioneer feminist Mary Wollstonecraft publishes "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman".

1840 UNITED STATES. Lucretia Mott founds an "Equal Rights Association", demanding equal rights for women and blacks.

1857 UNITED STATES. March 8, strike of New York women garment and textile workers demanding equal pay and a reduced 10-hour working day.

1859 RUSSIA. Emergence of a women's emancipation movement in St. Petersburg.

1862 SWEDEN. Women given the vote in municipal elections.

1865 GERMANY. Louise Otto founds the General Association of German Women.

1866 UNITED KINGDOM. The philosopher and economist John Stuart Mill calls for votes for women.

MILESTONES TOWARDS EMANCIPATION

1868 UNITED KINGDOM. Foundation of the National Women's Suffrage Society.

1869 UNITED STATES. Setting up of the National Woman Suffrage Association. State of Wyoming grants women the vote so as to have the necessary quota of electors to qualify for admission to the Union.

1870 SWEDEN and FRANCE open medical studies to women.

TURKEY. Inauguration of a college for the training of women primary and secondary teachers for girls' schools.

1874 JAPAN. First teacher training college for girls opened.

Suffragettes demonstrate in the London streets in 1913, carrying posters in French, German and English, to protest against discrimination.

Photo © Snark International, Paris

1878 RUSSIA. The first women's university opens in St. Petersburg (Bestuzhev University).

1882 FRANCE. November: a "Ligue pour le droit de la femme" (League for Women's Rights) set up under the patronage of the celebrated author Victor Hugo.

1888 UNITED STATES. Susan B. Anthony founds the U.S. National Council of Women. International Council of Women set up at Washington D.C. by feminist organizations of Europe and North America.

1889 RUSSIA. The famous woman mathematician Sofya Kovalevskaya elected as corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

1893 NEW ZEALAND. Women obtain the vote.

1901 FRANCE. On a motion by socialist deputy René Viviani, the French parliament discusses women's right to vote for the first time.

NORWAY. Women begin to vote in municipal elections.

1903 UNITED KINGDOM. Emmeline Pankhurst founds the National Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU).

1904 UNITED STATES. International Woman Suffrage Alliance founded.

Lively scene at a "Women's Lib" demonstration in Washington D.C.

Photo Don Carl Steffen © Rapho, Paris

1905 UNITED KINGDOM. Feminist meeting in Manchester; Annie Kenney and Christabel Pankhurst arrested.

1906 FINLAND. Women granted the right to vote.

1908 UNITED KINGDOM. Establishment of the Women's Freedom League. Feminist demonstrations at the Albert Hall and Hyde Park. Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst and Flora Drummond jailed after Trafalgar Square meeting.

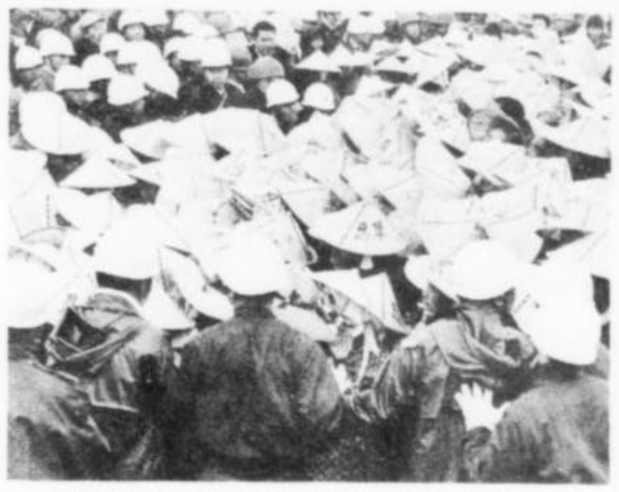
1910 DENMARK. At the second World Congress of Socialist Women in Copenhagen, Clara Zetkin proposes that March 8 should be chosen as International Women's Day to commemorate the New York women textile workers' strike (March 8, 1857).

1911 JAPAN. Creation of the Seito Sha women's liberation movement.

1912 CHINA. Several feminist organizations meet in Nanking on January 22, to form an alliance to co-ordinate their activities. They demand equal rights with men and present a petition to Sun Yat-sen, President of the Chinese Republic, on May 20.

1913 NORWAY. Equal voting rights achieved by women.

GERMANY, AUSTRIA, SWITZERLAND, DENMARK. March 8, women celebrate International Women's Day, demanding the right to vote and to be elected.



Hemmed in by police, Japanese women villagers protest against industrial encroachment on the countryside. The slogan painted on their conical hats signifies "trampled grass".

Photo © Magnum Paris

1914 TURKEY. First faculty for girl students created at Istanbul University.

1915 SWEDEN. The writer Ellen Key demands that information on birth control be made available and welfare provisions be made for unmarried mothers.

1917 NETHERLANDS and RUSSIA. Women obtain the vote.

SOVIET RUSSIA. The October Revolution proclaims and the first Soviet Constitution (1918) confirms the political, economic and cultural equality of women.

1918 UNITED KINGDOM. Women over 30 get the vote and the right to sit in Parliament.

1919 GERMANY and CZECHOSLOVAKIA. Women given the vote.

1920 UNITED STATES. Women obtain the vote in all States.

1923 LATIN AMERICA. On April 26, a historic resolution on women's rights is adopted during the fifth International Conference of American States in Santiago, Chile.

TURKEY. Spectacular progress towards women's emancipation follows Kemal Ataturk's election as President.

1925 JAPAN. Women are excluded from the "universal" suffrage bill voted by the Diet on March 30. This sparks off the rise of a Japanese feminist movement.

INDIA. Poetess Sarojini Naidu, a staunch defender of India's feminist movements, elected President of the Indian National Congress.

1928 LATIN AMERICA. Inter-American Women's Commission set up during the sixth International Conference of American States in Havana.

Indian women demonstrate against unemployment while women police keep order.

Photo © Magnum Paris

1929 ECUADOR. Women obtain the vote.

1932 SPAIN. The Republican Constitution grants voting rights to women.

1934 FRANCE. International congress of women for the struggle against Fascism and war held in Paris.

1936 FRANCE. Three women, including Nobel Prize-winning physicist Irène Joliot-Curie, enter Léon Blum's Popular Front government although women still not entitled to vote.

1945 FRANCE and ITALY. Vote extended to women.

1946 JAPAN. Six women elected to the Diet.

1951 INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION. On June 19, the I.L.O. adopts the Convention on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for work of equal value.

1952 UNITED NATIONS. December 20: United Nations General Assembly adopts Convention on the Political Rights of Women by a big majority.

Famed throughout the Arab world, the Egyptian singer Oum Kalsoum died in February 1975. For almost 40 years, Oum Kalsoum's renderings of classical poems and dialect songs won the admiration of a vast public from Iraq to the Atlantic Ocean.

Photo © Sygma Paris

1957 TUNISIA. A new law affirms equality of men's and women's civil rights.

1959 CEYLON (now Sri Lanka). Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike becomes the world's first woman prime minister.

1961 PARAGUAY grants voting rights to women. Women can now vote throughout Latin America.

1962 ALGERIA. Thirteen women deputies elected to the National Assembly.

1964 PAKISTAN. For the first time a woman, Miss Fatimah Jinnah, stands as a candidate in the presidential election.

1967 IRAN. The "Family Protection Law" allows women to work without their husbands' authorization. Iranian women had been forbidden to wear the veil since 1963.

1971 SWITZERLAND. Women get the vote.

1975 UNITED NATIONS. International Women's Year.

CUBA. March 8, a "family code" comes into force, requiring Cuban men to help their wives with the housework.

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

1. 562 million women in the world gainfully employed

The "Unesco Courier" presents here and on page 14 two articles based on an important world-wide study carried out by the International Labour Office. Entitled "Equality of Opportunity and Treatment for Women Workers," (*) the study was prepared as a basis for a general discussion on this question at the International Labour Conference to be held in Geneva in June 1975.

* Published 1974 by the ILO, Geneva. Price 15 Sw. Fr.

WOMEN make up more than a third of the wold's economically active population and 46 out of every 100 women between 15 and 64 years of age are employed.

It is estimated that of the world's 1,637 million persons employed in 1975, about 562 million are women. The female labour force in the more developed regions—some 187 million in 1970—may be expected to increase by some 20 million each decade and to number about 254 million by the year 2000. In the less developed regions, the female labour force has been estimated as reaching over 603 million in the year 2000.

The percentage of women in the total labour force in the major areas of the world varies considerably. The lowest figure is found in Latin America with about 20 per cent; Africa, South Asia and Oceania have about 30 per cent, while in Europe and Northern America about 35 per cent of all persons in the labour force are women; East Asia has a rather high percentage (about 39), while the U.S.S.R. has the extremely high level of around 51 women for every 100 persons in its labour force.

The available statistics indicate, however, that in certain areas women make up less than 12 per cent of the total percentage of persons at work (North Africa, Middle America [mainland], tropical South America, Polynesia and Micronesia), and in others between 12 and 21 per cent (Southern Africa, the Caribbean, temperate South America, Middle South Asia, South East Asia and Southern Europe).

In the United States women made up 38 per cent of the total workforce in 1972 as against 30 per cent in 1950. In Canada the number of working women rose from 27 per cent of the total labour force in 1962 to over 33 per cent in 1972. Australia and New Zealand have also both registered considerable increases in women's employment.

In Japan there has been a dramatic rise in women's employment. In 1972 women workers represented 38 per cent of the entire labour force and 48 per cent of the female population of 15 years of age and over.

In Eastern Europe women continue to play a highly important role in economic life. In Hungary women constituted 42 per cent of the workforce in 1971 (as against 38 per cent in 1963); in Czechoslovakia 47 per cent in 1969 (as against 43 per cent in 1955); in Poland 40 per cent of the labour force in 1972; and in Bulgaria, at the end of 1971, women in employment comprised 46 per cent of the total active population. In Romania and the German Democratic Republic they represent nearly 50 per cent.

In the less developed countries the great bulk of the female labour force is still in agriculture (e.g. over 90 per cent in some countries in Africa). In most of the industrialized countries the percentage of women in agriculture is low (under 10 per cent in many cases and between 1 and 2 per cent in the United Kingdom and the United States).

With some exceptions (e.g. Asia), women form a large part of the total

CONTINUED PAGE 12

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

WOMEN STUDENTS STILL OUTNUMBERED

In 1972, out of every 100 students enrolled in higher education courses throughout the world only 39 were women as against 61 men. In Africa women constitute only 23 per cent of the student population, in Asia (excluding China) 28 per cent, in Oceania 32 per cent, in Latin America 36 per cent, in North America 42 per cent, and in Europe 44 per cent. On the following pages we show the increasing, but in most cases still unsatisfactory, number of young women in various countries and regions who are studying to enter professions such as medicine, science, law, the arts, etc. Our figures are taken from a Unesco study entitled " Higher Education : International Trends, 1960-1970 ".

Photo Erich Schwab - WHO

▲ DOCTOR

A high proportion of Asia's medical students are women : 41 per cent in Japan in 1970, 81 per cent in the Philippines, 89 per cent in Jordan. The same is true of Latin America (60 per cent in Chile, 54 per cent in Paraguay and 48 per cent in Cuba) and Eastern Europe (76 per cent in Poland and 56 per cent in Hungary and the U.S.S.R.). In Africa, though facilities for medical studies are still limited, the number of women students of medicine is fairly high in comparison with other subjects. Top left, a Korean pediatrician examines a child in a Seoul dispensary. More than half (51 per cent) of South Korea's students of medical sciences (medicine, dentistry, midwifery, pharmacy, etc.) are women, though women only constitute 24 per cent of all students in higher education.

SOCIOLOGIST ▲

Above, Tunisian sociologist on a village survey. In Tunisia only 10 per cent of social science students are women. The percentage of women social science students varies widely throughout the world, ranging from under 16 per cent (Fed. Rep. of Germany, Spain, Lebanon and Turkey) to over 60 per cent (Bulgaria, U.S.S.R.). Between 1960 and 1970 there was a spectacular increase in the number of women students, the percentage doubling in Egypt and Iraq (from 14 to 37 per cent and from 14 to 25 per cent respectively), almost quadrupling in Indonesia (from 9 to 32 per cent), and actually reaching 53 per cent in the Philippines. In Latin America, apart from Panama (46 per cent) and Cuba (42 per cent), women social scientists are still a small minority

▶ labour force in the professional and technical category, in some cases actually outnumbering men (largely because of the predominance of women in educational and health services). They comprise only a small proportion of administrative, executive and managerial workers. On the other hand, they make up a large part of the clerical workforce in many countries, particularly in the more developed ones, and form a high proportion of the sales force in some countries. In most countries they are only thinly represented in the ranks of craftsmen, production workers and labourers.

In most countries women continue to be concentrated in a limited number of occupations in most instances at relatively low levels of skill and responsibility.

In this connexion it should be pointed out that there is a clear correlation between the education and training of women and their participation in economic activity. The general rule appears to be that the higher the levels of education the greater the woman's commitment to work, whether with or without short interruptions for childbearing and rearing. There is no such direct link between the level of education and the economic activity of men.

Another factor which influences women's participation in economic life far more than men's is the number and age of their children. As long as in most countries it continues to be assumed that the mother bears the principal responsibility for the care of young children, and as long as the social infrastructure in respect of child care remains inadequate for the demands made upon it, the presence of preschool and primary-school children will tend to have a limiting effect on the labour force participation of married women.

The increase in the number and proportion of employed married women has been accompanied by an increase in the number and proportion of working mothers.

In the United States, between 1940 and 1972, the number of working mothers increased more than eightfold. It is estimated that in Canada 1 million children have mothers who work. In Western Europe and the Nordic countries the proportion of work-

▼ GEOLOGIST

Below, an Egyptian geologist measures natural radiation during a field survey. In Egypt, 34 out of every 100 students of the exact and natural sciences are women. In Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia) women constitute at least half of all science students. The proportion is 20 per cent or less in the Netherlands, Norway, Fed. Rep. of Germany and Greece. In Asia the proportion of women science students is also low, except in Indonesia (32 per cent), the Republic of Korea (42 per cent) and Thailand (43 per cent). Unesco's recent study reveals that Latin America has the highest percentages of women enrolled in science courses: just over 50 per cent in Argentina and Ecuador, while Paraguay and Guatemala have twice as many women science students as men.

Photo ILO

Photo Martine Franck © Viva, Paris

▲ THEATRE DIRECTOR

Above, French theatre director Ariane Mnouchkine at rehearsal. Everywhere in the world there is a very high and constantly increasing percentage of women students in the arts and humanities (history, literature, archaeology, languages, psychology, etc.). In 1970, more than half the arts students in 15 European countries and most Latin American countries (81 per cent in Argentina, for example) were women. Asia too has a high proportion of women arts students: 86 per cent in Thailand, 61 per cent in Japan (as against 37 per cent in 1959), 46 per cent in Iran.

ing mothers with small children is constantly increasing. In the Federal Republic of Germany, more than a quarter of the economically active women have at least 1 child under 15 years of age.

In France, in 1968, among mothers aged under 35, 51 per cent of those with 1 child were at work. In Austria the 1969 micro-census showed that 46 per cent of mothers with children under 15 were working.

In the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe a very high proportion of the women in employment have dependent children. In Poland about half of all women workers had children under 16 years of age in 1973.

Part-time employment has also continued to increase. Although part-time employment is not for women only, the bulk of the part-time labour force is made up of women. In some countries the number of women employed on a part-time basis is considerable.

Some economists have advanced a theory on a three-phase life for women: the initial period of work coming before marriage and up to the birth of the first or second child; the second phase comprising withdrawal from employment until the last child has grown up; and the third phase being the return to employment until the normal age of retirement. This theory has been contested on the basis of facts brought out in recent studies of the pattern of women's work and home life in a number of countries.

In some of the more developed western countries there is evidence of a trend towards a continuous working career as against the three-phase life-work cycle; this sometimes takes the form of full-time employment, with sometimes some years on a part-time basis, but there is a continuity of work.

There is also evidence that women's commitment to work varies with the level of education. In the socialist countries the educational and social system and policy presuppose an almost continuous working career on the part of the vast majority of women. On the other hand, non-participation after marriage remains a common pattern among married women in some of these countries, at least until the children have grown up.

In many developing countries women—whether by necessity or by choice—tend to remain at work and the cycle of their work life is largely continuous. This may be traced partly to family poverty, partly to the high rate of women's participation in agriculture and partly to other factors, including the tradition of working hard (as in Asia and Africa) and their primary responsibility for family maintenance. ▶

TEACHER ▶

Right, an instructress supervises a typewriting class in Freetown (Sierra Leone). As in the arts, a very high percentage of students of education throughout the world are women. In 17 European countries women constitute more than 50 per cent of all such students and the figure reaches 70 per cent in Portugal, Hungary, Italy, Sweden, etc. In Asia (Bangladesh, Japan and Lebanon, for example) the percentage of women education students is at least twice as high as in other disciplines. In Latin America, the figures are 87 per cent for Argentina and 77 per cent for Brazil, but the percentage of women education students in the continent dropped slightly between 1960 and 1970. In Africa the proportion of women studying education is higher than in other fields.

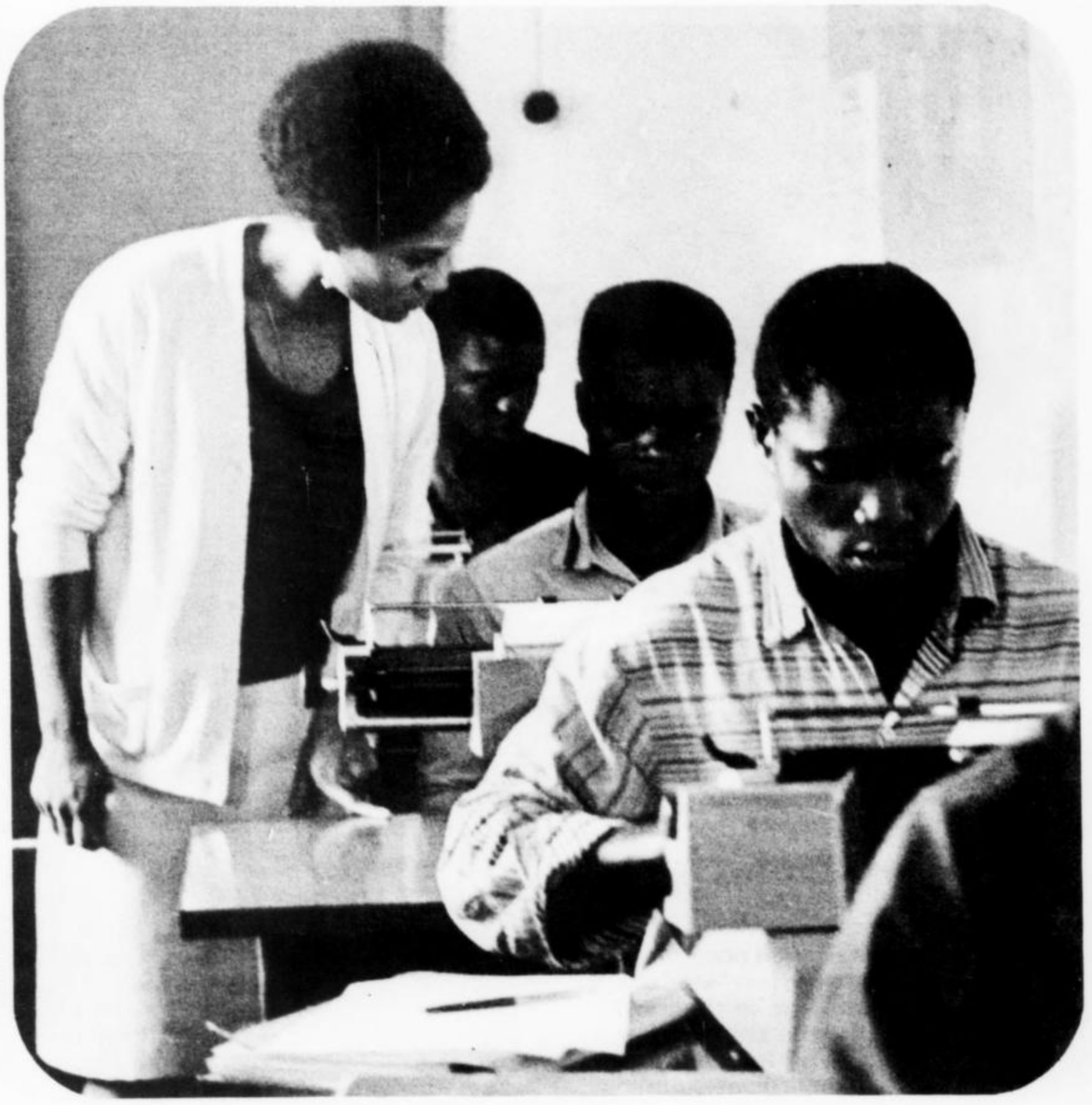


Photo ILO

2. Myths that die hard

HISTORICAL and political factors have proved to be of critical importance in changing the status of women, in particular in countries which have achieved independence or undergone a national revolution or a complete change of political, economic and social structures. Economic factors are also of basic importance in determining the extent of the employment opportunities available to women.

Experience has shown how difficult it is, at a time of chronic and growing unemployment and underemployment, to ensure women's right to work on a footing of equality with men. In most cases women workers are seen as a threat to men, as intruders in a male domain. And even in many developed countries women's right to work is dependent on the buoyancy of the economy. In periods of economic recession it is easy to see how fragile is their right to equality of opportunity and treatment.

Almost everywhere there remains a clear division of labour by sex with jobs labelled as "men's work" and "women's work". While the line of demarcation may vary with time and place, what is significant is the persistence of distinctions based on sex stereotypes.

As has often been emphasized, job labelling of this kind is both dangerous and discriminatory. It leads to recruitment based on sex rather than on capacity, and it perpetuates unproven beliefs about women's abilities and inabilities as workers. It places unjust barriers in the way of opportunities for advancement.

It creates a situation in which work traditionally done by men commands higher pay and prestige while that traditionally done by women is accorded lower pay and prestige and is consistently undervalued. It has no inherent logic.

The fact that in most countries girls and women are still to be found preparing for typically "feminine" occupations has caused considerable concern in countries which have been trying to overcome the division of the employment market into "women's work" and "men's work".

It is interesting that the budget proposals of the Swedish National Labour Market Board for the financial year 1974/1975 contained two proposals aimed at breaking down sex-linked occupational choice and recruitment practices.

The Board proposed that a training grant of 5 Swedish crowns per hour (approximately $1.00) should be paid for a maximum period of 6 months, to employers who train men for "women's" jobs and vice versa.

This would be for an experimental period of three years. It also proposed that, on a two-year experimental basis, employment subsidies of the same amount for jobs created under regional development schemes should be conditional upon at least 40 per cent of the new jobs going to each sex. These proposals have been approved by the Swedish Parliament.

In the United Kingdom, the Trades Union Congress has urged that special grants be made to firms which train girls and women for jobs outside the traditional range of women's work (especially at technician level).

Photo © Paul Almasy, Paris

JURIST

Above, a judge in a French court. In 1967 less than one French law student in three was a woman, and in the world's law schools as a whole the number of women students is still low. For example, in seven Latin American countries, (Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Panama and Peru) women comprise less than 20 per cent of law students. In Cuba and Uruguay, however, there are almost as many women studying law as men.

Equal pay for Equal Work. One of the most blatant forms of discrimination against women continues to be unequal payment for work of equal value. Acceptance of the principle of equal pay means that minimum wages must be the same for men and women, that in the public sector the same salary scale must apply to men and women without discrimination and that in the private sector action towards equal pay, for example by the revision of collective agreements, must be stimulated and supported.

The general picture and the trends are encouraging. But there are still many practical difficulties to be overcome. In many countries employers are reluctant to apply the principle fairly even when they accept it, and reveal a tendency to evade equal pay by a variety of practices and by reference to "economic factors" or the need for "technological innovation".

Why is it that so often when women enter an occupation in any large numbers wages fall or fail to rise? Why is it that wages are traditionally low in so-called women's occupations? It would appear that in male-dominated societies women's work is apt, without reason, to be regarded as of less value than that of men.

However important it may be to achieve equal pay for equal work, this is only one aspect of the broader question of women's wages. Their chief characteristic almost everywhere is their low level as compared with those of men.

While failure to apply the principle of equal pay fully and fairly may be an element in this situation, it is not the only factor: others include the heavy concentration of women in badly paid industries and occupations, their often lower level of education, training and work experience, the handicaps imposed on them by society as a result of their responsibilities, and outright discrimination in employment.

Moreover, women tend to work shorter hours than men and fewer bonus hours (e.g. at night or on Sundays or holidays). And where wages are determined with regard to length of service, women's generally lower seniority may be an additional factor. ILO studies of the position in industrialized countries suggest that women's wages are about 50 to 80 per cent of men's for the same work time.

Can differences in women's wages be justified by differences in their work performance? Are women "reliable" workers?

These questions are often asked and all too often left unanswered, leaving the inference that there is little doubt that women are less steady workers than men.

A number of myths about women as workers are crumbling under the pressure of facts.

Women are often accused of excessive absenteeism or of having a high rate of turnover. In the United States, a Public Health Service survey of work time lost due to illness or injury in 1967 showed that women lost on the ▶

Photo © APN, Paris

CONDUCTOR

Left, Soviet conductor Veronika Dudarova directs a symphony orchestra more than 200 strong. In 1970 almost half the students in Soviet art and music schools were women. Unesco's international study reveals that in most countries, however, the percentage of women students of fine arts is much lower than that of men : 15 per cent in Norway in 1970 for example, and 16 per cent in Sweden. In Japan on the other hand, where only 28 per cent of those enrolled in higher education are women, there is a remarkably high proportion of women fine arts students : 67 per cent.

▶ average 5.6 days as compared to 5.3 days for men. A number of European surveys have come to the same general conclusions.

Analyses indicate that the skill level of the job, the marital status and age of the workers, length of service and record of job stability provide better clues to differences in job performance than does the fact that the worker is a man or a woman.

For Women Only. In many countries industrial and social history has left a heritage of protective legislation applying to women only. This legislation, however well intended, has sometimes led to discrimination against them as workers. The prohibition of underground work for women is the most common form of protective legislation applying to women only.

Most countries also specify a series of other occupations from which women are barred on the grounds that the work is dangerous or unhealthy for them. In many cases physical strength was a primary factor in the prohibitions and restrictions; in other cases health protection from the standpoint of women's role as a mother was a leading factor. In still other cases, there appears to have been a notion of protecting women from work regarded as "unpleasant" and "unsuitable for women". The general trend today seems to be to attack the hazards as hazards for all workers and to improve the standards of protection for men as well as women.

On the other hand where women, because of their biological function of reproduction, do incur proven special health risks as new techniques and substances are introduced, they do require and should receive special protection and this should not be regarded as discriminatory or in conflict with the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment. There will always remain a limited sphere in which women will need protection: that of maternity.

Maternity protection. Maternity protection is a most important matter for working mothers and for society as a whole. Greater responsibility for maternity protection is being assumed by the State, on the grounds that maternity is a clearly recognized social function.

Considerable progress towards maternity protection has been made during the last decade. The ILO standards on this subject have continued to provide the framework for national action. Today, few countries lack some system of maternity protection for women workers.

Nevertheless, even if the essentials of maternity protection are now being extended almost everywhere, women workers still have many practical problems connected with pregnancy, childbirth and the care of infants.

One of the more interesting recent developments in maternity protection has been the extension of the period of authorized maternity leave beyond the normal statutory or prescribed period, without loss of employment rights.

This extension of leave is now common practice in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. For example, in Bulgaria a working mother, following obligatory paid leave,

Photo © Niepce-Rapho, Paris

◀ **ARCHITECT**

ENGINEER ▶

Unesco's recent study on higher education shows that in almost all countries women engineering students are few and far between. In most cases women constitute less than 10 per cent of trainee engineers, only exceeding 20 per cent in a very few countries such as the U.S.S.R. and Hungary (35 per cent). Only one Canadian woman studies engineering for every 100 men, whereas women form 35 per cent of the student population of Canadian universities. At the world-famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology, there were 630 women students in 1971 as against 6,670 men. Right, a Canadian engineer makes an on-site inspection. Left, a young French architect visiting a school during construction.

may take further leave for between 8 and 12 months at a minimum basic wage and still further unpaid leave with employment rights protected until the child is 3 years old.

In Poland a mother may take leave until her child is 3 years old, with guarantee of re-employment and related benefits. In Hungary, after 5 months' maternity leave with full pay, a working mother may choose to remain at home until her child is 3 years old and during this period, which is counted as a period of employment for retirement purposes, she receives a monthly mother's allowance and the guarantee of returning to her former job. In the German Democratic Republic, a mother may take one year's unpaid leave after paid maternity leave, and during this extra leave her job is reserved and she returns to work without loss of seniority or pension rights.

Certain other European countries have also introduced somewhat similar arrangements. In Spain after the period of paid maternity leave, a working mother may take voluntary unpaid leave for an additional period of at least one year and not more than 3 years; at any time during this period she may apply for reinstatement and the employer is obliged to appoint her to the first vacancy which occurs in the same or a similar category. In Italy a woman may take an optional extra 6 months' maternity leave after the statutory compulsory and extended period.

On January 1, 1974, Sweden became the first country to enact legislation making cash maternity benefits payable also to the father. Under this law either working parent may stay at home to care for a newborn child and collect the cash benefit. The husband instead of the wife may opt for the period of extended leave or the period may be divided between them, with the same safeguards relating to reinstatement in employment, seniority and pension entitlements.

Several countries provide for a period of birth leave for fathers: in France paid leave of 3 days is reimbursed to the employer by the family allowance fund, while in Sweden the period is 10 days. In Norway it has been proposed that men workers whose wives are in gainful employment should be entitled to from 2 to 4 weeks' child care leave during the first year of the baby's life and that benefits be paid to men workers during such leave.

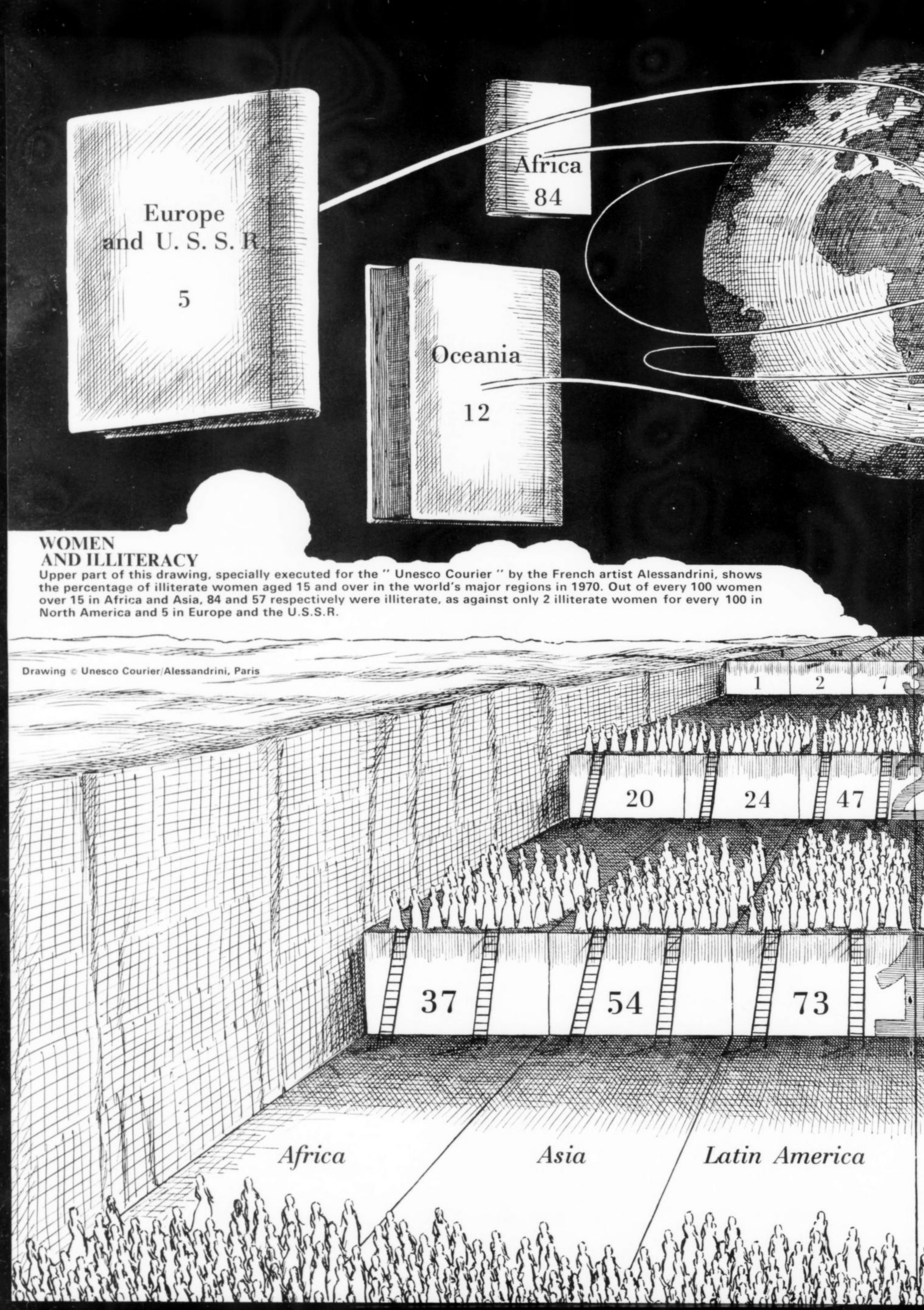
Child care. Despite the steady increase in the number of married women workers with young children, the child-care services and facilities have in most countries been slow to respond to new needs. The time is past when society can refuse to provide community child-care services in the hope of dissuading mothers from leaving their children and going to work: this flies in the face of facts.

The trade unions in a great many countries are giving serious and continuing attention to the problem of child care and are putting it forward as a basic right for workers.

Who Works Longer? International comparative research carried out under the auspices of Unesco has shown that, almost without exception, married women generally work longer hours at home than their husbands because of the traditional division of family chores and concept of sex roles. On the whole, working mothers had less than two-thirds of the free time that their husbands enjoyed. Their total weekly hours of work amounted to between 70 and 80

Change in the position of women in economic life, the family and society implies change in the role of men in these spheres. In turn, this implies change in social attitudes, which themselves define and confine men's and women's roles in all walks of life. Problems may be discussed as "women's problems" but they must be considered as problems of men, women and children, of society as a whole. ■

Photo © Johann Krieber, Canada

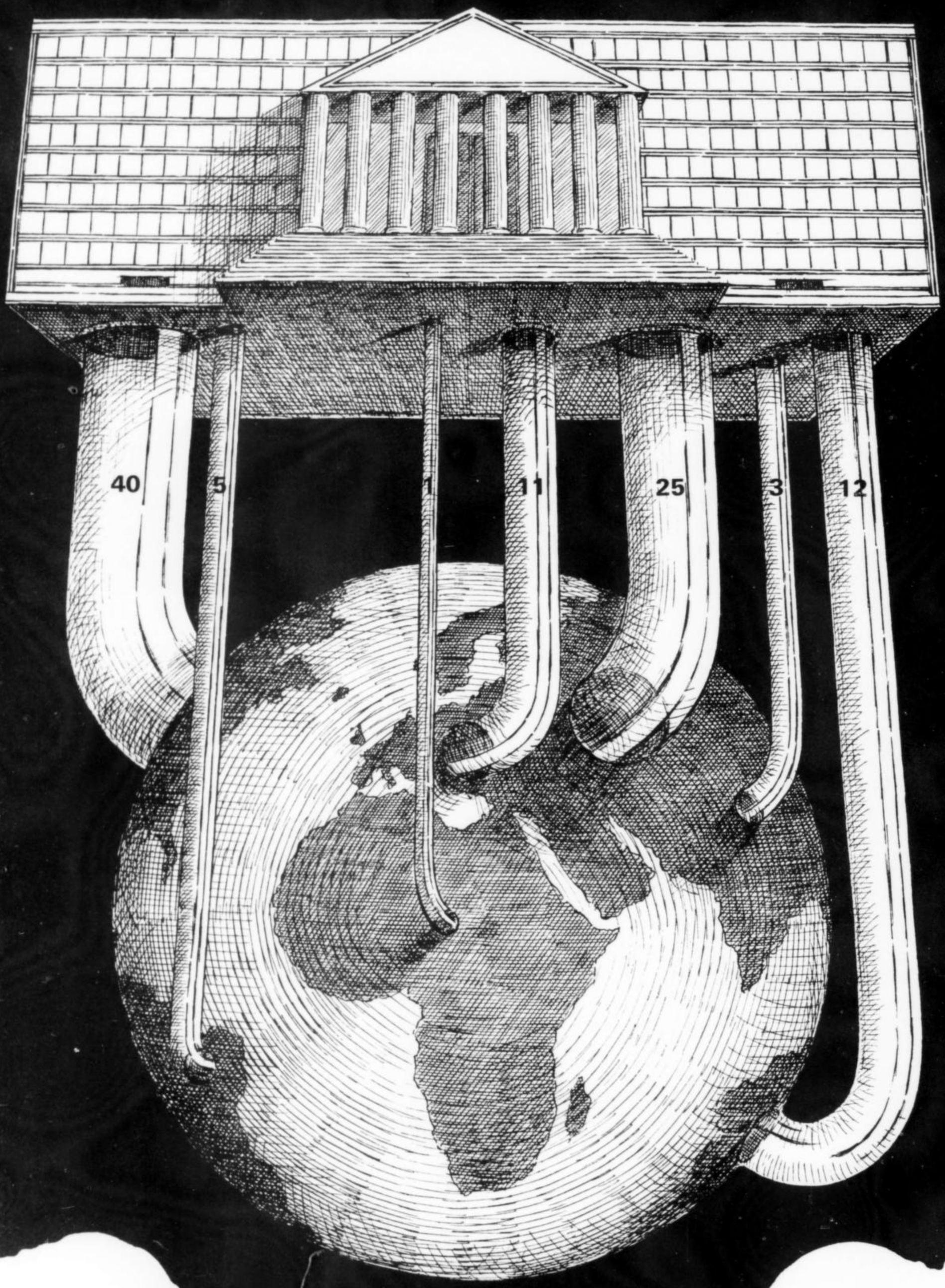


WOMEN AND ILLITERACY

Upper part of this drawing, specially executed for the " Unesco Courier " by the French artist Alessandrini, shows the percentage of illiterate women aged 15 and over in the world's major regions in 1970. Out of every 100 women over 15 in Africa and Asia, 84 and 57 respectively were illiterate, as against only 2 illiterate women for every 100 in North America and 5 in Europe and the U.S.S.R.

WOMEN AND THE STEPS TO EDUCATION

Lower part of our drawing shows the percentage of girls enrolled in schools and higher education in the various world regions in 1970. The large figures 1, 2, 3, at centre of each step denote three age ranges corresponding approximately to the three levels of education : girls aged 6 to 11 (primary), 12 to 17 (secondary) and 18 to 29 years (higher). For example, in Africa, 37 girls out of every 100 in the 6-11 age group attend school ; 20 aged 12 to 17 ; but only one out of 100 in the 18-29 age group is enrolled.



WOMEN AT UNIVERSITY

Our diagram shows how young women aged between 20 and 24 are faring throughout the world in their effort to gain access to university education. Tubes leading from each continent to porticoed building symbolizing the university vary in thickness according to the percentage of women in each continent enrolled in higher education. For example, it can be seen that for Africa only one woman out of every 100 in this age group reaches university, as against 3 for Asia, 5 for Latin America, 11 for Europe, 12 for Oceania, 25 for U.S.S.R. and 40 for North America.

Drawing © Unesco Courier/Alessandrini, Paris

FOR AFRICAN WOMEN EQUAL RIGHTS ARE NOT ENOUGH

The real task is to rethink the role of men in present-day society

by Thelma Awori

THE international cry for equal rights for women is not the panacea for the problems of the African woman. Whether equal rights have been the solution to the problems of an oppressed group anywhere has yet to be proved. It is therefore necessary that the problems which the African woman faces be examined and their nature determined before an adequate solution is suggested.

My standpoint is that the exploitation which the African woman experiences today, as a result of her changing role within changing social systems, can only be solved by also taking a look at the role men play in society.

So I propose to examine one of the most prevalent problems of the African woman today, namely the problem of increased and ever increasing responsibilities, in the light of women's response to these problems and the proposed international solution of equal rights.

When it is said in Africa that the home is the responsibility of the woman, the statement is not to be interpreted lightly. It does not simply refer to the cleaning and cooking and child-care, but also to the production and preparation of all that goes into making her home.

In the Western world a man works to "provide" for his family. In the traditional African sense this is the responsibility of the woman. The father was important in that it was through him that a woman and her children gained membership of a group and rights within it. He was also supposed to be the protector and custodian of his family and its wealth.

So whereas the wealth, property, children and even the wife could be said to be "owned" by the father and his agnatic group, the responsibility of maintaining and improving those items owned by her husband fell to the wife. Even though the responsibility was great, at least she had the assistance of others in the homestead together with the assistance and moral support of her husband.

In colonial and post independent Africa this situation has been subjected to severe changes. The mobility of men in search of employment and education leaves women with the full burden of the family. From Cape Town to Tunis millions of women have experienced what it means to be father, mother, husband, wife even though they are not widows. The drift into urban areas and mines leaves women without the protection and assistance of their husbands.

Our rural sister is the worst hit by this mobility. Her husband left her years ago to find work in the towns. She might see him two or three times a year, but the rest of their communication is limited to messages and letters often written by others, since both of them may be illiterate. If she is lucky, money may trickle back home in small amounts for school fees or as capital for development. Otherwise she must engage in farming or business in order to keep herself and her children fed and clothed.

The towns and mines forgot she existed when they planned the one room for her husband to live in, and bath and cooking facilities to be shared with other single men. His wage does not take his seven children back home into consideration. Worse still he must have his small luxuries—alcohol and a few prostitutes.

If she is very poor her children may ▶

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Photo © Fulvio Roiter, Venice

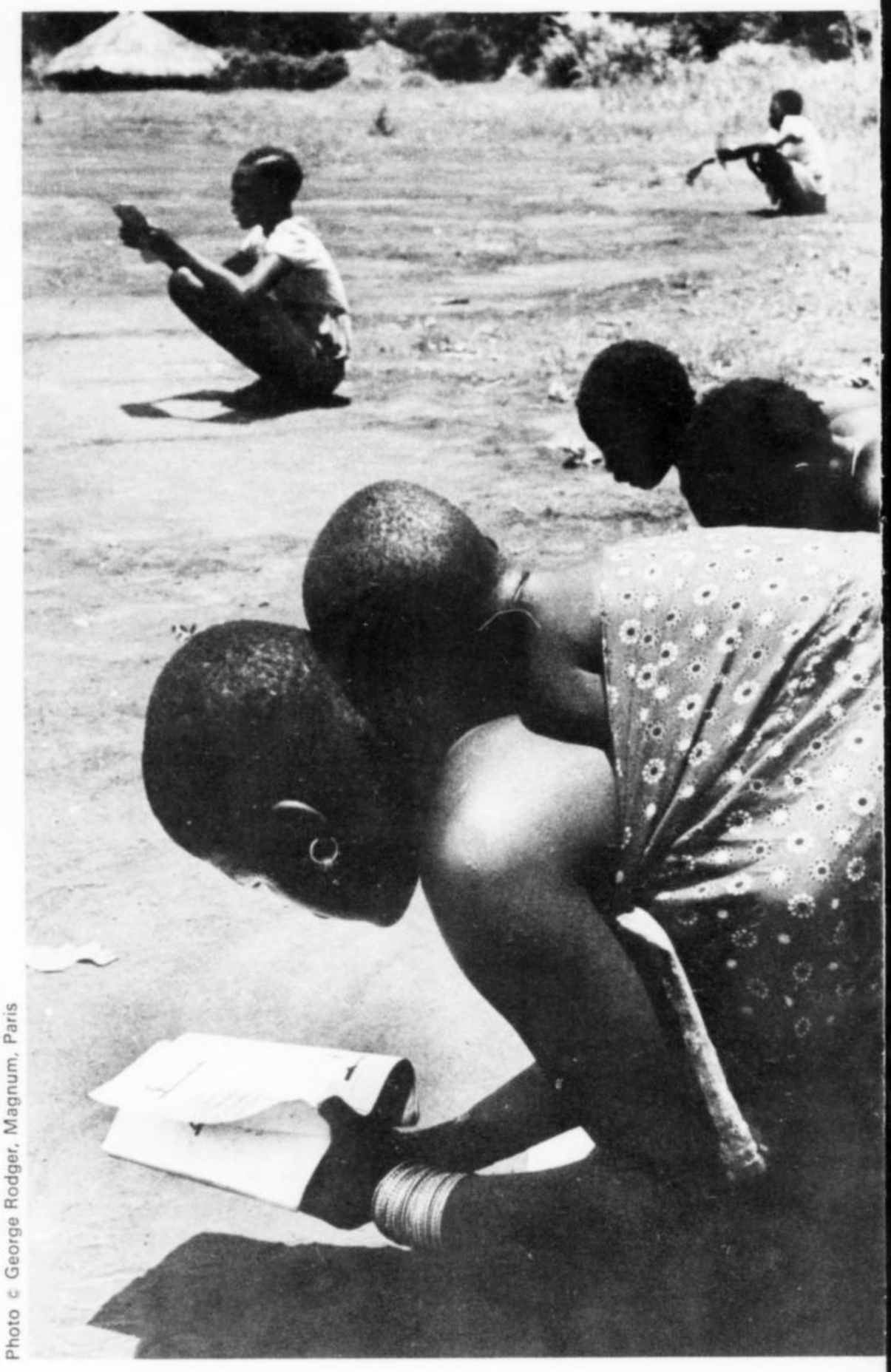

Photo © George Rodger, Magnum, Paris

Above, an Ivory Coast potter completes a vase she has made using traditional skills. Right, a young Sudanese woman learns to read.

▶ not go to school. They stay at home and help her with the work. Nowadays many children go to school or drift to the urban areas as soon as they are old enough, leaving a great labour vacuum in the rural areas. Cattle have to be tended, the land has to be ploughed, sowed and harvested, daily household chores must be attended to.

This situation influenced Kenya's Attorney General to make the following statement to a conference of women in East Africa: "Although wives have a right to be maintained by their husbands under customary law, in effect, the dying influence of customary sanctions has resulted in many abuses, whereby husbands go to work in the towns leaving their wives in the country without adequate provision. This aspect must be remedied."

She is amazingly calm and hard-working for all her suffering, this rural woman. Perhaps we do not take a close enough look at her face to see the anxiety behind her eyes and the rapid aging of her figure. She goes on from day to day carrying out her duties, assuming the responsibilities left to her by her husband. She must protect and provide for herself and her household. It is she who has come to understand and accept the clear distinction between ownership and responsibility; not conceptually but in practice.

As long as she has children her plight is sealed. It would seem that the closer the African woman is to tradition, the more seriously she takes her responsibility for her children. Motherhood has a mystical slavish influence on her. She feels she must always be prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for them—a feeling not equally shared by the father.

A mother is always a child's last resort. So that to leave her husband's home would mean leaving her children in the care of an equally over-burdened woman and an absentee father. This would not be an especially favourable situation for the children. Yet to take them as dependents to her parents, who themselves need her help, would be unacceptable to her

people. So she does what is necessary to maintain her family.

This woman has a lot to teach her urban sister who finds herself stripped of traditional protection and barely able to cope with her new situation. Even if she does come to realize the distinction between ownership and responsibility, it is when it is too late; after she has had a baby by someone who admits that it is his, but will leave the bulk of the responsibility of rearing the child to her.

Many African countries have Affiliation Acts granting the unmarried mother rights to claim maintenance for her child from its father, but the amount is usually ridiculously small, sometimes 3 dollars a month. Kenya, in fact, repealed its Affiliation Act in 1969.

In other cases she might marry someone and find that full emotional and financial support is not as forthcoming from him as might have been expected. The bitterness with which she accepts this situation shows in her face and her manners more than in the case of her rural sister. If she is a working girl she can take care of herself. But she is often still in school and her parents have to bear the responsibility.

Only an insignificantly small number of African women, married or single, are non-income producing members of their families, whether the income is in cash or in kind. This is linked with tradition and with anxiety. The tradition is that African women have always worked. The tradition of polygamy seems to have made it necessary for the African woman to be self-sufficient. The anxiety is related to making sure that ends meet regardless of the circumstances.

In traditional society the anxiety was not as great because society had built-in securities for its members. In the present situation the anxieties, especially of the urban African woman, are tremendous. The family structure, even though still existent, no longer provides all the security she needs.

She is anxious about her own support and welfare. She is anxious about her husband's continued and undivided affection. Ten years ago, in *Kenya Women Look Ahead* (East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi, 1965) C. Oloo and V. Cone alluded to the tensions the modern African woman experiences. Today these tensions are full blown.

Many women married to the most responsible men will fear to praise their husbands openly. "He is good today," they say, "but men change, you know." The anxieties of the modern African woman are justified. Men change and the African male has undergone many changes which have also caused him anxieties, the most severe being that of maintaining his image as "the boss". This translates itself into very oppressive behaviour to both men and women.

What is the African woman doing about her situation? The answer is contingent upon several factors. As has been said before, our rural sister is more calm about her plight, especially if she is married and has several children. If she is unmarried and young, the town is the answer with its multifarious means of "happiness", independence, and a life which is physically less strenuous.

Even as a single girl her relationship with men is not rosy and totally to her advantage. She is constantly in competition with other girls who are ▶

In many African countries little more than a decade after independence, the status of women, at least in its legal aspects, is often more favourable than that of their European counterparts. In their daily lives, however, many African women still face discrimination. Below, two Senegalese women on the steps of the Dakar Law Courts.

Photo Bruno Barbey © Magnum, Paris

BURDENS OF SOLITUDE

In Africa today many village women must look after their homes and support their families alone and unaided, while their husbands are absent for months at a time working in towns often hundreds of kilometres away. Right, two Liberian country-women on their way to market. Opposite page, a Nigerian woman awaits the return of her husband.

Photo Pamela Johnson - World Bank

▶ out to get the big spenders, the "sugar-daddies".

If she accidentally becomes pregnant and the relationship falls apart, she must take full responsibility for the child or leave it in the dust-bin, where the social workers collect babies for charitable homes.

But if she is lucky and her relationship with her man continues, the baby will get support and she might get her rent paid and even a car. These girls are the envy of women generally. Without the obligations of wifehood they seem to be able to get exactly what they want from men.

Men also seem to respond better to this situation, which is free of psychological, financial and legal complexities. A man can step in or out of it whenever he likes. Many single girls and young divorcees find this a perfect situation.

The older, Christian woman will take her problems to the Lord in prayer. After all, she reasons, the life of Christ was a sacrificial one. So why not hers? Without this attitude many of our young men and women today would be unable to boast of an education and a family home life.

Yet this woman too, unable to leave an oppressive situation because of her children, will spend sleepless nights figuring ways of stretching meagre earnings and making the best use of them. She has accepted the responsibility-ownership dichotomy and will take the responsibility.

The most problematic case seems to be the younger, more educated African girl. Regardless of the advice she receives from her elders, she psychologically rejects the irresponsibility of her man, but not without a battle. This reformist believes in doing something about her situation and the battle is often fought on many fronts—psychologically, socially, financially and sometimes even physically.

This is the girl who believes that one's rights are not to be taken away without a struggle. But with what result? Often, in defeat, she resorts to the legal system when she may secure her divorce, only to increase her anxieties. The care of three or four children in a male-dominated society is no easy task for a single woman. Besides, society has more sympathy with widows than with divorcees.

If her elders prevail upon her and she remains in the union she does so with bitterness; a bitterness that produces ulcers, bad headaches, depression and aggressiveness. But this is the fighter for equal rights. Her anxiety moves her to act. She has fought for equal pay, paid maternity leave, housing in her own right, the right to own property in her own name even if she is married.

She has succeeded in achieving these ambitions, but none of these have improved her relationship with her husband. The more rights she secures the more independent she becomes and the more responsibility she assumes. Unlike her lucky urban sister with a "sugar-daddy", she finds herself contributing more than her fair share for family maintenance.

The situation is so prevalent, many women wonder why it is necessary to have a husband. Somehow the African man does not seem to respond well in this atmosphere. He feels overshadowed, overpowered and humiliated.

For those who are concerned about the family as an institution of a healthy society, this situation in Africa warrants examination from a fresh perspective. Clearly the struggle for equal opportunities and equal rights might be more difficult in some countries than in others, but African women within a decade of independence are miles ahead of their European sisters in their legal achievements.

In Uganda, as soon as women were courageous enough to ask for certain rights, by sending a delegation to the President, everything they asked for

Photo World Bank

was granted. In Somalia, a predominantly Muslim country with a military government, women also have been legally given equal rights. It would seem therefore that the struggle for *more* opportunities and rights for women (the word "equal" is totally irrelevant) is not a priority. These are being achieved with the co-operation of men.

The problem that warrants attention is a clearer definition of the male role in African society today and this needs to be done in conjunction with a definition of the female role. Our men are having just as many problems adjusting to the changing circumstances of society.

The struggle for more opportunities for women will solve other problems in society but not the problem of the male-female relationship, which is a human relations problem, and these are seldom solved by laws.

The prevalent attitude of most men towards their present situation was well expressed by one African leader in a speech to a women's seminar. He said, "The wife is responsible for peace and stability in the home. She must create a safe and steady base which would encourage her husband to succeed in the world of business or employment. This attitude on the part of women would reduce heavy drinking and road accidents and would induce husbands and children to stay at home." This statement may be interpreted in many ways, but it must never be mistaken for anything other than what it really is—*a cry for help.*

A statement of this nature shows a strong unwillingness to take responsibility for one's own behaviour. In effect it says, "My role is to succeed in employment and business, but you too must get a job or go into business because I cannot do it alone. And if I fail, it is really your fault because you have made conditions at home so unpleasant for me. You must also always be prepared to cover the tracks of my failure by keeping a smiling face and an appearance of financial and psychological well-being regardless of what I do." The woman, therefore, becomes the scapegoat for all his failures, and not being fully aware of her situation, she fights for equal rights and thereby becomes a better scapegoat.

The African woman today must get rid of this man-child on her back. This is the responsibility, the burden. Equal rights will not rid her of this burden. She must help her man to stand on his feet and discover his role in a relationship of equal responsibility.

The mechanics of how the role of men will be defined and how men will become committed to a more responsible role in their relationship with women is what requires public discussion and public concern. At present our men find their profession, time spent in bars, and other non-productive behaviour useful facades for their problems.

The task therefore that must begin in 1975, declared "International Women's Year" by the United Nations, is the task of helping our men on the African continent to define their role in a meaningful relationship with women. The training of our sons, an opportunity often forgotten, is an area of great potential. As for our husbands and fathers of our children, the battle seems impossible, but to win it would certainly be worth the effort.

■ ***Thelma Awori***

From a young

Photo © Kl. Fleischman, Rodenkirchen-Weiss, Fed. Rep. of Germany

Burmese girl's notebook

by Khin Myo Than

THE Burmese girl pays great attention to dress and likes to wear her traditional costume. She is very feminine and may appear like a fragile flower. Her status has not changed over the centuries. Is she dominated by men or subdued by social tradition, like women in many other countries were and are still? No, and she never has been.

As a little girl, she may play the same games as her young brother. Should a little boy, on the other hand, make garlands of flowers ? This is not considered becoming. At the age of 5 or 6, she starts her schooling. Burmese people accord an important place to education and culture. They respect and honour learned people and teachers, as they do their parents and elders. The word "daw", equivalent to Madam, and used in addressing a married woman, is also used for young women holding a university degree or exercising a profession.

Before the British conquest (between 1824 and 1826), education was ensured by the Buddhist monks, who for ethical reasons could only take care of boys. The girl's education was at home, in the family, but was not neglected. The British were very astonished at the high literacy level in Burma of girls as well as boys. A British report of 1826 notes that women "for the most part know how to read and write", and, "entered with the greatest warmth into the news and politics of the day."

During the colonial period the British introduced the lay vernacular and the anglo-vernacular schools for the local people. Burmese parents readily sent their little girls to these schools. Whereas, in pre-colonial Burma, parents kept money to buy jewels for their daughters, they soon adapted themselves to the notion that learning was a gem that no one could steal. Nowadays, there is a uniform educational system for boys and girls.

The end of childhood for the girls is marked by "nadwin", a sort of "passage rite" (1): on reaching the age of 12 or 13, the girl goes through this colourful ceremony during which her earlobes are pierced. Henceforth, she is considered to have reached the "years or discretion". She wears earrings and assumes greater responsibility in the family. Soon she will think of getting married.

For a Westerner, Burmese society

KHIN MYO THAN, *of Burma, is a woman lawyer specializing in public international law. She is now working with the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service, a non-governmental organization based at Unesco headquarters, Paris.*

(1) At about the same age, the age of the Catholics First Communion, little Buddhist boys too go through an initiation ceremony called *shin-byu*. At this ceremony, their heads are shaved and they wear the yellow robe of renunciation to worldly things as do Buddhist monks. They leave their families, for a certain period of time, to live the life of monks in a monastery. Here they are taught Buddhist ethics, among other things.

Marriage in Burma is contracted without any civil or religious ceremony. A young couple (photo left) wearing their most beautiful and colourful clothes are married according to a simple traditional ritual at the bride's house in the presence of relatives and friends. Below right, Burmese women board an Irrawaddy river ferry to sell food to the passengers. In many cases the dishes have been prepared at home by their husbands.

may seem prudish. Young girls and boys are not seen kissing and hugging in the streets, and even married couples do not walk arm in arm. Flirtation and dating do not exist. It is only in a very discreet and chaste manner that the Burmese make known their sentiments and feelings. However, this does not mean that a Burmese girl lowers her eyes in front of a man, nor does she stay at home behind doors.

Young girls and boys have many occasions to meet: at school or university, but also at *pwés* (open-air shows that last for three whole nights), at festivals and even at the pagoda where one may talk freely, unlike in Christian churches.

What I may call "reserve" in the relationship between young people is *equally* shared by boys and girls. Young men, having at an earlier age gone through the monastery life, have learnt from the monks to become detached from worldly things. They are self-disciplined and respecful towards others. Girls seem more worldly: they like being coquettish and elegant and love to wear jewellery. However, from childhood their mothers inculcate in their little girls the forms of social etiquette and among others, how to behave with men. Thus girls and boys do not look for casual affairs but true love and marriage.

With such conceptions, a boy is not surprised should a girl he "courts" (by paying her compliments, composing little poems, or giving small presents) ask him to marry her, if such is his intention. But when a girl asks such a question she is already sure of the answer.

Though parents may wish their daughter to marry a certain young man of *their* choice, the final decision lies with the girl. Burmese traditional law recognizes the priority of the sentiments of the couple over the will of the parents. If parents are opposed to a marriage, the lovers may elope to live together.

The very fact of living and eating together constitutes the bonds of marriage. As Burmese parents do not wish to have to put up with the problems following marriage by elopement, they willingly obey the recommendations contained in the Burmese law books, the Dhammathats, which say: "If a daughter desires to marry a man, her parents should permit her to do so, in order to prevent disgrace."

Wedded, with or without their parents' consent, the newly married couple is not absorbed into the organization of the family of either side, but on the contrary, marriage emancipates both partners. Both man and wife leave their respective family and live apart in their own house. The Burmese word for marriage, "ein-daung-pyu", means "set up house."

In Burma, contrary to many other cultures, procreation is not the main aim of marriage. Since nothing is permanent on this earth the Buddhist family does not trouble itself with its perpetuation. A Burman marries a woman to have a life-long companion and helpmate with whom he shares his joys and sorrows and his fortune. One does not have to strive to make the family name survive since there are no family names.

A name is something personal. After marriage the woman keeps her name without either substituting it by or adjoining it to that of her husband. Children have names which have nothing in common with those of their parents. Whereas in a Western society the mother-to-be and her husband go through the names of saints in the calendar and have to choose the first name (or Christian name) of the child, in Burma a name is given much later. The parents observe the nature and character of the child and give him or her a name in keeping with such considerations, as well as with astrological data (the time and day of birth).

The name is a whole (not composed of name and surname) and usually it has a meaning. The names are generally flattering but not always. It may happen that a little girl is called, for instance, Wet Ma (little piggy). On growing up, if she is not happy or satisfied with such a name, or any other which may be flattering but which she feels is not suited to her character, she can change it (as can boys) so that it fits her personality

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Photo H. Antony, London © Holmes-Lebel

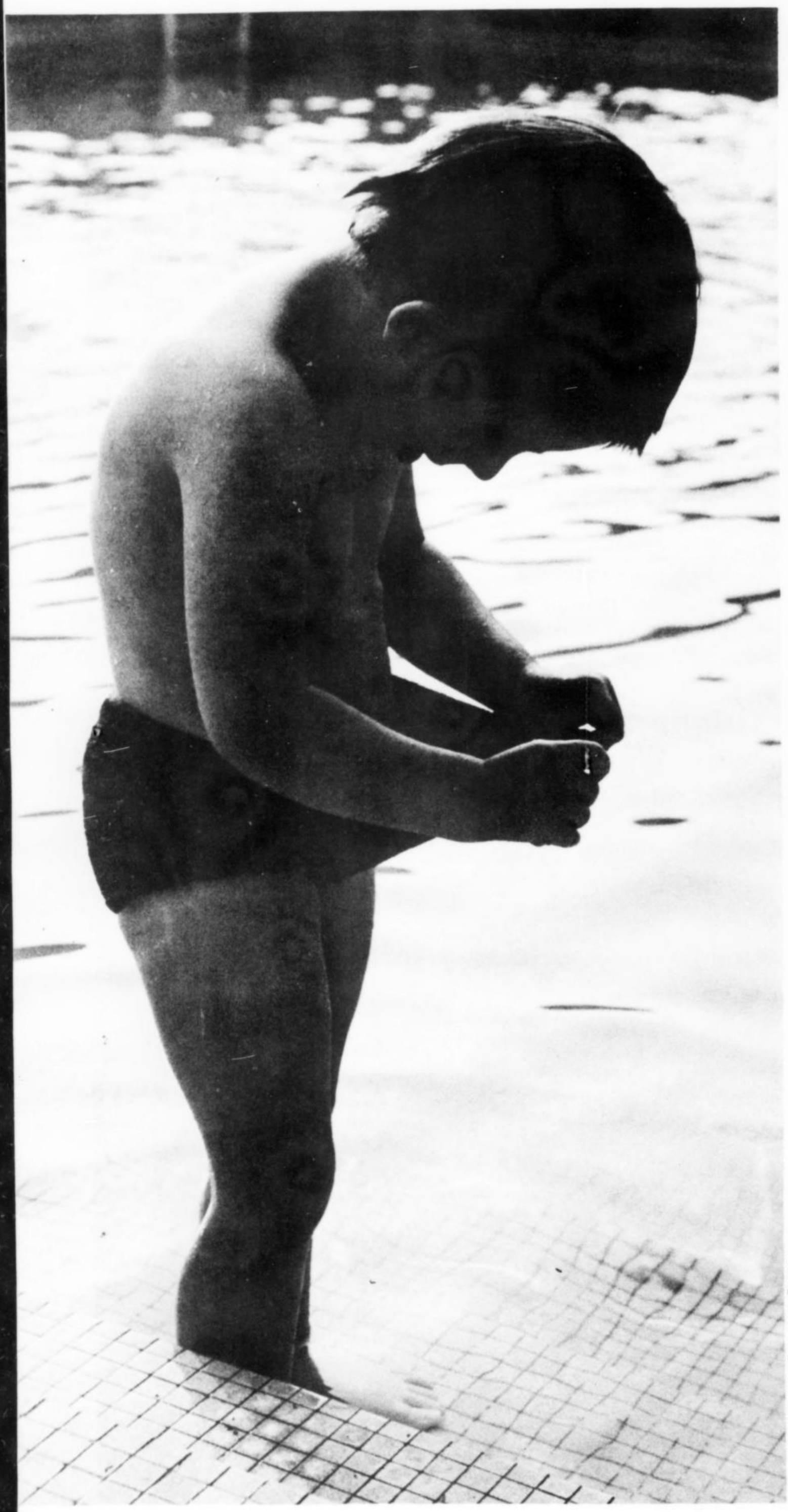


Photo © René Maltête, Escrennes, France

Male chauvinists are made not born, concludes a sociologist after a continent-wide inquiry

by Hernan San Martin

IT may appear to be stating the obvious to say that a woman is a person in her own right just the same as a man is. Yet in a great number of contemporary societies, where the long-standing myth of the inferiority of women and the superiority of men still persists, this fact is not easily accepted.

HERNAN SAN MARTIN, *Chilean sociologist now living in Paris, has taught in a number of universities in Latin America and Africa and has worked in Asia as a U.N. specialist on higher education. Among his many published works are " Salud y enfermedad en America Latina : un estudio antropologico " (Health and sickness in Latin America : an anthropological study), " Nosotros los chilenos " (We Chileans) with a preface by Pablo Neruda (Nobel Prize for Literature, 1971), and " El hombre y sus comportamientos : respuesta a Konrad Lorenz " (Man and his behaviour : a reply to Konrad Lorenz).*

Machismo

LATIN AMERICA'S MYTH-CULT OF MALE SUPREMACY

Photo © Claude Venezia, Paris

Most of the traits which at any given epoch have been considered to be natural biological characteristics of womanhood are in fact acquired through the assimilation of customs, traditions and myths as to the social roles or functions men and women are expected to carry out.

In other words, genetically speaking, one is born male or female, but the social roles of a woman or a man are learned; they are a cultural acquisition specific to each society. It is from this situation that an abundant mythology regarding masculinity and femininity has developed.

Most present-day societies expect a woman to fulfil her feminine role through marriage, as a lawful wife and mother. However, she can just as well become a mother without getting married, and there would seem to be nothing shameful in that. But society sanctions the woman who steps out of line by making her motherhood unpleasant for her.

There are no such sanctions for the man who fathers an illegitimate child, though. So it is not surprising that marriage should have become the aim of most women in societies, in the majority today, where an independent life is not nearly so easy for a woman as it can be for a man.

The situation of women in these societies is made more difficult by the fact that their upbringing is entirely oriented towards the goal of marriage. Not that we have anything against marriage as such, but it happens to have become the focal point of a number of myths which have gained the status of social imperatives.

They include the myth of femininity the myth that marriage is inevitable, the myth of spinsterhood, of virginity, etc., and, on the other side of the coin, the myth of "machismo", of male supremacy, which is in fact the myth of woman's "inevitable dependence" on man and that of man's "natural authority" over woman. In other words, of man's superiority in all things.

How much truth is there in all this?

The tremendous influence of culture on what the Western Christian world has held as "natural" in the behaviour and prerogatives of the sexes has been demonstrated beyond all question.

On this subject of "male" and "female" behaviour and attitudes, the famous American anthropologist Margaret Mead, in her remarkable study of three New Guinea peoples in the Pacific (1), has this to say :

"We found the Arapesh—both men and women—displaying a personality that, out of our historically limited preoccupations, we would call maternal in its parental aspects, and feminine in its sexual aspects. We found men, as well as women, trained to be co-operative, unaggressive, responsive to the needs and demands of others. ▶

(1) " Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies " (Morrow and Co. Inc., New York).

▶ We found no idea that sex was a powerful driving force either for men or for women.

"In marked contrast to these attitudes, we found among the Mundugumor that both men and women developed as ruthless, aggressive, positively sexed individuals, with the maternal cherishing aspects of personality at a minimum. Both men and women approximated to a personality type that we in our culture would find only in an undisciplined and very violent male.

"Neither the Arapesh nor the Mundugumor profit by a contrast between the sexes; the Arapesh ideal is the mild, responsive man married to the mild, responsive woman; the Mundugumor ideal is the violent aggressive man married to the violent aggressive woman.

"In the third tribe, the Tchambuli, we found a genuine reversal of the sex-attitudes of our own culture, with the woman the dominant, impersonal, managing partner, the man the less responsible and the emotionally dependent person."

One could give many other examples to show that women are quite capable of fulfilling not only the roles attributed to them as women, but also those assigned to men. There is no doubt that training, or the lack of it, and specifically-oriented education have had a great deal to do with the way people distinguish between masculine and feminine roles.

This differentiation began long ago when work in ancient communities was allocated according to age and sex. The practice took root and eventually came to be considered as part of the natural order of things.

In time the distinction between the roles of men and women became even more sharply defined, culminating in hierarchic societies divided into economic and social classes where the goal of life was, as it still is, to accumulate wealth and power.

During the European Middle Ages women were included among material possessions as the property of men, which buttressed the myth of an intrinsic difference between the roles of men and women so solidly that even today there are those who use a variety of irrational arguments in maintaining the theory of man's biological and intellectual superiority over woman.

In analysing the ideology and behaviour associated with "machismo", one also needs to examine the myth of women's dependence on men.

"Machismo", the myth of the superiority and inborn authority of men over women, is not only part of traditional customs and beliefs in Latin America, but is very much alive in modern stratified societies, in many of which male social supremacy has been built into laws or has become an accepted institution.

"Machismo" has become an oppressive ideology expressed in many different attitudes and forms of behaviour, especially in economic life, employment and sexual life. The superiority of the "macho" (sometimes translated as "all man" or "he-man"), which is the essence of the myth, reveals itself in these and many other fields, in which the archetypal male appears as a mythical figure: strong, dominant, authoritarian, brave, aggressive, paternal, self-confident, the great seducer, polygamous and, naturally, unfaithful.

The counterpart of this myth is the myth of docile femininity, based essentially on the idea of woman's social dependence on man, with the woman seen as a gentle, submissive, self-sacrificing, maternal, wifely, obedient and faithful creature, who must be respected even while being mistreated in every sense of the word.

Table published below summarises the major characteristics of this dual mythology, as revealed by studies we have carried out in various countries of Latin America. A book presenting the findings of our inquiry is to appear shortly in Mexico City *(El Hombre y sus comportamientos: respuesta a Konrad Lorenz* [Man and his Behaviour: a Reply to Konrad Lorenz] by H. San Martin and Sarella Henriquez.)

These characteristics are considered "normal" and "natural"by people in Latin America. In fact they are both real and mythical. Real because they are part of the daily existence of men and women, though of course to different degrees. Mythical because they are considered "natural" or innate, whereas in point of fact they are a cultural acquisition.

Obviously, this mythology is expressed in ways which vary from one country to another according to its culture and its social and economic structure, and the influence of factors such as religion or cultural exchange between different ethnic groups living side by side.

However, the myth is invariably linked to and dependent on social and economic structures, even in situations which have no apparent connexion with them. For example, the use of the terms "stronger sex" and "weaker sex" is not ungrounded, in view of the fact that basically Latin America's social system sets a higher value on men as productive workers than on women. Completely different openings are offered to men and women on the labour market, and the situation is scarcely different with regard to access to education.

This mythology and these social discriminations lead most Latin American women, in all but two or three countries, to accept marriage as their social objective. This is one consequence of the structure of society, expressing the dependence of women and the oppressive ideology imposed

FEMININE AND MASCULINE STEREOTYPES

In this table, Hernan San Martin, the author of our article, lists the major characteristics of "masculine" and "feminine" stereotypes still current today in Latin America. His list is based on the results of an inquiry which he carried out in a number of countries.

FEMININITY	MASCULINITY
— gentle and mild	— hard, rough-natured
— sentimental	— cold
— emotional	— intellectual
— intuitive	— rational, analytical
— impulsive, lacking in foresight, frivolous	— orderly, far-sighted
— superficial	— profound
— fragile (the weaker sex)	— strong
— submissive, docile	— over-bearing, authoritarian
— dependent and protected (easily frightened, and tearful)	— independent, brave (men never cry)
— timid	— bold
— cautious, prudent	— aggressive, daring
— maternal	— paternal
— flirtatious, seductive but also a sex object	— severe, the seducer
— fickle, inconstant	— stable
— pretty	— ugly
— lacking in self-confidence	— self-confident
— passive	— active
— self-denying, self-sacrificing	— self-centred, comfort loving
— envious	— generous
— curious	— indifferent
— monogamous	— polygamous
— virgin	— expert and experienced in love-making
— faithful	— unfaithful
— home-loving	— deeply absorbed by business and public life
— masochistic	— sadistic
— hysterical	— obsessive

by men, whose sense of possession is extended to wife and family.

The man is the head of the family in all respects. One of them, which is of great importance in Latin America, is the role assumed by the honour of the family. This has given rise to sub-myths, such as that of "purity and virginity", which always applies to wives and daughters, but never to men or boys. This situation was legalized by the "Indian Law" introduced in Latin America by the Spaniards in colonial times.

We find a similar interpretation of the "purity" of women among the castes of Sri Lanka and the Malabar Coast in India, where girls are married at an extremely early age, before puberty, perhaps with the aim of defending this "purity" through a commitment to arriage and fidelity. In these places a well-known proverb affirms that "men's honour is preserved through their womenfolk."

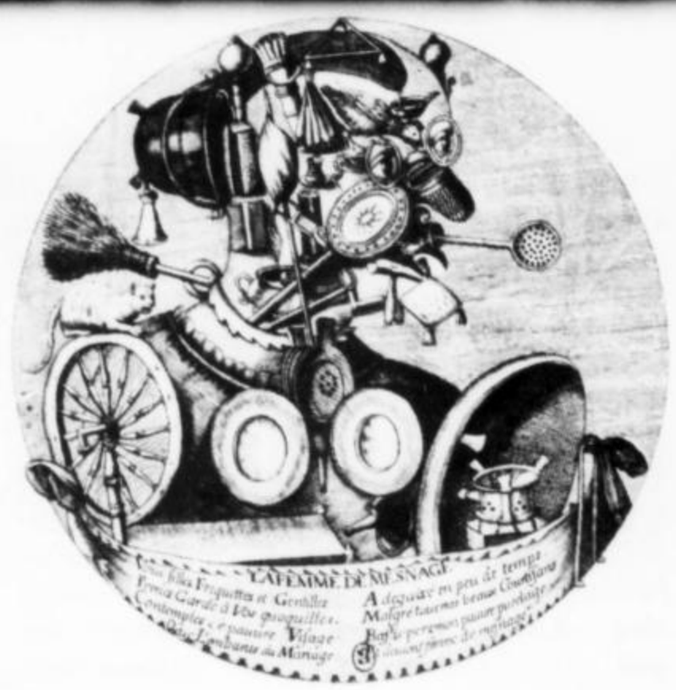
Latin America and Asia are by no means the only places where this kind of situation is found. Sociologists have studied the concept of "honour" in Mediterranean rural communities of Europe, and have noted that the function of "honour" is similar to the Latin American idea, particularly to the concept as it still exists in Mexico and Colombia, for example.

The important thing is not to lose sight of the fact that these mythologies relating to the sexes are oppressive and discriminatory. The family and social institutions tend to produce a man or a woman rather than a person. In other words, the roles of male and female in society are attributed even before the child's personality is sufficiently developed to assume them. Children accept these roles unconsciously, though they may reject them later on as adults when the mythology is exposed for what it is. It is at that point that women begin to demand their emancipation.

The influence of these myths can also be clearly seen in the reasons given by men and women for wanting to get married. In a survey carried out in Chile between 1968 and 1970 we obtained, among others, the following results:

Reasons for marriage: Chilean women

— To get away from home and be free	19 %
— Loneliness	14 %
— Fear of becoming an old maid	13 %
— Because she thought she was in love	13 %
— Parental pressure	12 %
— Because she was really in love	11 %
— To have and run her own home	7 %
— Because she needed support	6 %
— Because she wanted children	5 %



DOMESTIC DRUDGE. The author of this anonymous 17th-century engraving has used household utensils to create a satirical portrait of Woman as a person forever condemned to a life of domestic drudgery.

Photo © Snark International

Reasons for marriage: Chilean men

— To affirm his masculinity	27 %
— To father children, thus proving his virility	21 %
— To have a companion to help him in his home life	14 %
— For economic advantages and social prestige	14 %
— Sexual attraction	14 %
— Love	7 %
— Other reasons	3 %

So we can see that the Chilean woman's main reason for getting married is to free herself from parental control, although in fact she immediately becomes dependent, economically and in other ways, on her husband. We also find given here as reasons for marriage other characteristics of the feminine myth: fear of becoming an old maid, submission to her parents' wishes, her need for support and protection because she feels unable to stand on her own feet.

As for the Chilean man, he clearly reveals his own mythical concept of his personality when he declares that his main reasons for marrying are to set up a family and have children, thus affirming his masculinity and proving his virility to the world at large. Only then does he refer directly to his future wife, but merely as someone to do the housework and look after the children.

It is no mere chance that love comes low down on the list of reasons given by both men and women for getting married. This shows to what extent the social system can influence such highly personal decisions and behaviour. It also reveals how male possessiveness and other mythical concepts carry more weight than what should be the real basis for marriage: a spontaneously loving relationship between a man and a woman.

But, one may ask, what are the social and historical realities out of which this myth has grown and flourished?

The main characteristics of Latin America's social systems today are economic dependence, social underdevelopment, a rigidly hierarchical social structure, inequality of opportunity between different groups, and a system of values which, like the male mythology, is handed down, propagated and imposed through a systematic education, the family, the mass media, and so on.

People are living in a state of alienation, unable to make use of Latin America's natural resources for human development. The unending struggles for freedom in the continent are proof of the alienating situation in which the great mass of the population is living.

In social conditions such as these and with a system of values which discriminates in favour of men, women are obviously in a precarious situation and this is everywhere apparent—in education, work, social security, the university, civil rights and so on.

And yet according to a world survey carried out some years ago by Unesco (2), no country has laws obstructing the access of women to education, employment or a full social life. This may be so in theory, but in practice things are quite different.

Argentina, Chile, Cuba and Uruguay are the Latin American countries where women have fullest access to all levels of education, to employment and to civic life. Yet even in Chile, for example, only about 25 per cent of women of working age are actually employed, and whereas in 1952 the number of women with jobs totalled 25.3 per cent of women of working age, this figure had dropped to 22.4 per cent by 1970.

The drop in the percentage of working women, a general tendency throughout Latin America today, is due to a failure to develop means of production and to the social stagnation resulting from economic dependence.

Other factors must also be taken into account. The fact that a woman works does not necessarily mean that she is emancipated or enjoys equality of opportunity with men, since women are still under submission to their husbands and there is a difference between the kind of jobs open to men and women.

Similar inequalities exist in education and the professions. Enrollment statistics for women students in Chilean universities over the last ten years show that the majority of women were studying for four professions; education, pharmacy, the social services and nursing. Similar findings emerge with respect to non-professional work. More than half of the women working ▶

(2) "Comparative study on access of girls and women to technical and vocational education" (1968).

▶ in Chile are employed in "women's jobs": in the textile industry, shops, the services sector and foodstuffs.

And so it is clear that the problem of women's economic dependence and the whole mythology of their inferiority to men is directly linked to the economic activity and structure of the country in which they live and has nothing to do with the fact that they are women.

If women play no part, or at any rate too small a part, in society, it is because they have been prevented from doing so by social factors and not because of their biological or psychological characteristics. The world-wide revolt of women and young people today is a reaction to a historical situation created by the "society of the adult male."

Today women and young people are claiming their rightful place in society. This is not a conflict between generations or between the sexes, still less is it an aggressive attack on adults, as Konrad Lorenz claims; it is simply the legitimate outcry of a large section of the population which has hitherto been deprived of its responsibilities and its rights.

What adds confusion to the situation is the fact that we are witnessing a pseudo-emancipation of women: certain superficial aspects of the male-female mythology are, it is true, being demolished, but genuine freedom has yet to be achieved. This is because there can be no real emancipation of women until men too have been fully emancipated.

Women will not achieve their freedom simply by leaving their parents' home to get married, or by working in offices and factories, only to find their household chores waiting for them when they get home.

On this subject the noted American philosopher, Herbert Marcuse, has made the following comment: "If this is supposed to mean that all women should get out of the house and find a job, I don't see how it can be called liberation. There would simply be thousands upon thousands more secretaries having to sit for over eight hours a day in an office taking idiotic dictation from idiotic bosses on idiotic matters, or standing for eight hours a day in front of a conveyor belt. This is not liberation."

Women can be free only in a society that is free, and this cannot happen unless men too are free. Women have the same social problems as men. Consequently, the liberation of both sexes from dependence, from situations created by myths, and from alienation, must be treated as a problem of mutual concern which they must solve together.

■ *Hernan San Martin*

FROM A BURMESE GIRL'S NOTEBOOK

Continued from page 27

better. In the towns, a simple announcement in a newspaper as to the change of name is enough.

As marriage has no metaphysical significance, there is no need to say "yes" before a priest or a mayor. The ceremony is performed in the presence of the families and friends who are all witnesses to the marriage. Wearing their most beautiful and colourful clothes, they all meet in the house of the bride.

The ceremony is very simple—the couple superpose their right hands on a cushion and they may eat out of the same silver bowl—and the marriage is pronounced. After marriage, they do not wear wedding rings as in western societies and there is no outward sign as to whether one is married or not. The union is symbolized by the silver bowl which the couple keep preciously in their home.

The law relating to marriage has been for centuries in advance of that in most Western countries. The rights and responsibilities of both partners are equal and reciprocal. As long as marriage subsists, all property constitutes an indivisible whole. There is no marriage contract and the system of a joint estate is the only existing one. Marriage is maintained by the mutual accord of husband and wife.

In Burma, divorce may be obtained by mutual consent, unlike most countries where this is still impossible and one partner to the marriage has to prove a fault committed by the other. In case of divorce by mutual consent, each spouse takes what belonged to him before the marriage. Acquisitions made during the marriage are considered as common property which is divided equally between the spouses. Though divorce is easy to obtain, it is very rare.

The equalitarian ideas of Burmese Buddhist customary laws are so strong in the country that they also influence non-Buddhists. An example is the Burma Muslim Dissolution of Marriage Act. This measure, which was approved by the Burma Muslim Congress without undue difficulty, became law in March 1953. It gave Burmese Muslim women rights equal to those of Buddhists: equal opportunity to divorce their husbands, and a right to the return of their marriage portion on dissolution of the marriage.

This measure occasioned loud protests in some other Muslim countries where the wife had no redress against the arbitrary decision of a husband to carry through a divorce, with or without cause. The Burmese Muslim woman has now the same status as her Buddhist sister and like her goes forth unveiled.

Marriage and, more generally, relations between men and women are based on equalitarian terms. In France, for instance, a man "gallantly" gives up his seat to a woman and lets her pass before him. Burmese women do not receive such attention from their menfolk. As a matter of fact, in Burma the rules of precedence are based on age and not on sex. Burmese people are very respectful to their elders. Thus, a woman gives precedence to a man older than herself.

On the other hand, French gallantry does not seem to be found in family life. At home after work, a Frenchman seems more preoccupied in getting into his slippers, watching television or reading his newspapers than helping his wife with the household chores. He finds it natural that his wife, who has also worked the whole day, maybe in a factory or an office, should now do "overtime" on so-called "female duties": looking after the children, cooking, serving at table and washing up, etc.

Though Burmese men, in the eyes of Westerners, may not appear gallant in public, they do not hesitate to share in the family tasks. A Burman is not ashamed nor is he considered "effeminate" when he does the cooking or washes the dishes. It is not uncommon to see a Burman holding his baby in his arms and walking up and down a room humming a lullaby before putting the baby to bed, while his wife may well be reading a newspaper.

Even though the Burman finds it natural to do some of the housework, it is nevertheless the woman who has the responsibility of looking after the home. Generally, she is in charge of the family budget. Traditionally, trade too has long been in the hands of women.

In the markets, smoking their big cheroots (Burmese cigars) or chewing betel nut, women offer their wares or, from an eating stall, sell dishes which were probably prepared by their husbands while they themselves were getting dressed up to go to market.

Young women often run little shops, and thus have many opportunities of meeting young men—and maybe their future husband... In any case, married or not, Burmese women are very sociable and are reputed for their keen business sense.

Thus, traditionally, men and women have worked in a complementary way. Nowadays, industrialization has furnished new types of work to which women have quickly adapted themselves. Alongside men, women have taken the road leading to workshops, factories and offices. They have

Letters to the Editor

ESKIMOS AND THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

Sir,

I greatly admired your issue "The Eskimos, a People that Refuses to Disappear" (January 1975). It showed us the Eskimos with their traditional customs and culture, but above all the confrontation that exists between this age-old civilization and the modern world.

The open letter from Chief Dan George was a poignant reminder of this situation. Whenever a people becomes subject to outside domination, it begins, little by little, to disintegrate. That is why self-determination must be a universal rule applying to all peoples. Unfortunately, far too many have been denied it, and your issue is a salutary reminder that we should pay far more attention to this crucial problem of our time.

I hope you will find space to deal more fully with the subject in future issues. You deserve the highest praise for the quality of your articles and their presentation.

Farid Younsi
Lyons, France

SYMBOL OF PEACE AND BLISS

Sir,

The unusual beauty of the bronze Buddha shown in colour on the cover of your December 1974 issue ("The Heritage of Nepal") has captured for me the idea of perfect peace and eternal bliss. I have framed it and keep it before me for inspiration.

I am glad to take this opportunity to say how much I enjoy and appreciate your magazine, which I have subscribed to since its beginning, for the light it throws on the world past and present. I wonder if it would be possible for you to print the enclosed Great Invocation, a world prayer. It is issued by the Lucis Trust, 235 Finchley Road, Hampstead, London NW3 6LS.

P.A. Hartnell
Breda, Rye, U.K.

The Great Invocation

From the point of Light
within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into
the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love
within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into
the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the
Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little
wills of men—
The purpose which the
Masters know and
serve.

From the centre which we
call the race of men.
Let the Plan of Love and
Light work out.
And may it seal the door
where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and
Power restore the Plan
on Earth.

NOT A BURDEN ON SOCIETY

Sir,

In the discussion of the problem of population growth and providing people with all of life's essentials, especially food, Julian L. Simon in the May 1974 issue of the " Unesco Courier " indicated that " babies consume but do not produce " and that they do not affect the gross national product "for 20 years or so ", and therefore many persons fear that if there are more people now " there will be less resources left for people in the future. "

On the other hand, your October 1973 issue justly condemned the fact that at present 40 million of the world's children under 14 years of age are workers.

Thus, in one case, children produce nothing (and only consume), while in the other, they only work, and do so to the detriment of their health and their physical and mental development.

I would like to point out a solution that avoids both extremes, one that has been proposed by two outstanding educators (Robert Owen in the U.K. in the 19th century, and Anton Makarenko in the U.S.S.R. in the 1920s and 30s) and confirmed in practice and experiments. It consists of combining work with study and training, beginning at about nine years of age.

The opportunity for this has been created by machine production, which, unlike manual labour, does not require great physical strength. Machine production actually created the need for combining work and study because it is based on the application of natural scientific knowledge, which people master most successfully when they work in large factories and apply scientific and theoretical knowledge in practice.

In A.S. Makarenko's experiment, 500 children from the ages of nine to 18 supported themselves, the school and the factory entirely by their own labour, and spent 40,000 roubles a year on visits to the theatre, 200,000 roubles for trips and excursions for the whole collectivity, besides giving the state a net profit of 5 million roubles a year. In other words, each child produced 833 roubles of profit a month (at the exchange-value of the rouble during the first half of the 1930s).

The children worked four hours a day, and all received a secondary education. Not only did they learn a trade, but even more important, former waifs and strays became worthy members of society.

Combining work in machine production with study has a positive effect on the training of personnel, on the growth of labour productivity and the development of industry and technology, and it is beneficial to the health and physical development of children and adolescents, since their work time is limited (from one to three hours, depending on their age), and they are not employed in harmful fields or on night work.

The main thing is that their work is tied in with their training and development. At the same time, the problem of eliminating juvenile delinquency is fundamentally resolved.

When society solves the problem of combining work and study, children and adolescents will play an entirely different role in population growth. Would it not be worthwhile to consider this important factor in discussing demographic questions?

A.I. Novikov
Teacher
Perm, U.S.S.R.

LEONARDO'S MANUSCRIPTS

Sir,

My warm congratulations to you on your magnificent issue on Leonardo, celebrating the Madrid codices (October 1974).

Charles S. Ascher
New York, U.S.A.

become teachers, doctors, engineers, lawyers, judges and even parachutists in the army. Burmese women parachutists are said to be the best in South East Asia. Inversely, men may be typists or stenographers. In Burma there are no small ads listing "women's jobs".

Equalitarian ideas in Burma have given women access to work at all levels. The country has no institution of higher learning like the French "Ecole Polytechnique", which till recently was not open to women. Burmese society readily accepts the fact that women occupy high-ranking posts in different spheres of life, even certain posts that were only occupied by men during the colonial period. The evolution of society has enabled women to play a new role in the community compared with the time when their responsibility was usually at the level of the family (as traders and heads of small businesses, etc.).

Whereas in France, for instance, some women are often more interested in reading "women's magazines" than in following politics, in Burma, there are no "fashion magazines", and since the times when they could be queens or *myothugyis* (hereditary heads of a group of villages), Burmese women have always been interested in political affairs. Since independence, women have been deputies and ministers, and women flock eagerly to the polling booths. It is estimated that 80 per cent of Burma's women voted in the 1960 elections.

Under such conditions, it is not surprising that Burma has no Women's Liberation Movement. Burmese women have nothing to fight for in a society that has always been called a "society of equals", in every sense of the term.

■ ***Khin Myo Than***

UNESCO NEWSROOM

BOOKSHELF

RECENT UNESCO BOOKS

■ **Race as News,** two general studies on attitude change by Otto Klineberg and Colette Guilbaumin, and a study of the British national press by Paul Hartmann, Charles Husband and Jean Clark, with an introduction by James D. Halloran. 1974 (24 F).

■ **Portuguese Colonialism in Africa: The End of an Era,** by Eduardo de Sousa Ferreira with an introduction by Basil Davidson. 1974 (20 F).

■ **Racism and Apartheid in Southern Africa: South Africa and Namibia.** A book of data based on material prepared by the Anti-Apartheid Movement. 1974, 156 pp. (15 F).

■ **New Trends in the Utilization of Educational Technology for Science Education,** edited by P.E. Richmond. 1974, 247 pp. (35 F).

■ **The Cultural Policy of the United Republic of Tanzania,** by L.A. Mbughuni. 1974, 72 pp. (10 F); **Cultural Policy in Romania**, by Ion Dodu Balan with the co-operation of the Directorates of the Council of Socialist Culture and Education. 1975, 70 pp. (10 F) *(Both published in Unesco's "Studies and Documents on Cultural Policies" Series).*

■ **Standards for Library Service: An International Survey.** (Documentation, Libraries and Archives: Studies and Research series, No. 6). 1974, 421 pp.

■ **Science Policy and Organization of Research in Sweden.** (Science Policy Studies and Documents, No. 34). 1974, 60 pp.

Paintings by Indian women on view in Paris

A unique exhibition of 200 paintings and drawings by women artists from Mithila, lying between the Ganges and Nepal, in the Indian state of Bihar, will be held at the Louvre Museum (Paris) from March 21 to May 19, 1975. In the past the kingdom of Mithila, centre of a remarkable civilization, was a matriarchal society. Today, on the occasion of important religious festivals, the women of Mithila paint images of the gods of the Indian pantheon such as the one shown here.

Unesco Director-General's tribute to Sir Julian Huxley

The great English scientist Sir Julian Huxley died in London on February 14. A brilliant zoologist, a biologist of world-wide reputation for his work in embryology, and a noted popularizer of science, he was Unesco's first Director-General, from 1946 to 1948.

On learning of Sir Julian's death, Mr. Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, Director-General of Unesco, paid the following tribute: "Sir Julian Huxley was one the major architects of Unesco and gave its work some important directions which still mark its activities. From these may be selected its interest in problems of the environment and the preservation of nature, for in 1948 these were by no means widely regarded as matters for international concern. It was under his leadership that Unesco concerned itself with the creation of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

"Sir Julian's term of office," Mr. M'Bow continued, "saw the conception of Unesco's first major work of co-operative international scholarship, the *History of the Scientific and Cultural Development of Mankind,* with which he remained associated after relinquishing office.

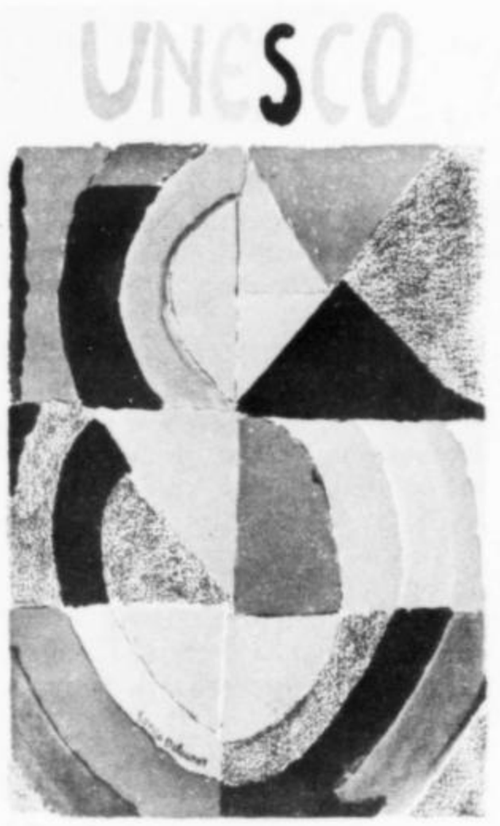
"Above all, perhaps, it was his vision as a scientific humanist that Sir Julian gave to Unesco. To him, science was an instrument of man's power and he was concerned that it should be rightly used along with education and culture in the service of welfare, peace and justice. It is this legacy which those who work with Unesco treasure today."

Unesco story in Braille

Unesco has brought out a 4,000-word Braille booklet describing its current activities and its work during the past 30 years. A cassette recording of the booklet is planned for blind people who do not know Braille. Requests, written or in Braille, for free copies of the booklet, which has appeared in English, French and Spanish, should be sent to Mr. F.H. Potter, Visitors' Service, Public Liaison Division, Unesco, 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris.

Japan's $20 million gift to U.N. University

Japan has given $20 million to the endowment fund of the United Nations University in Tokyo, as part of its pledge of $100 million to the new university during the period 1974-1978. The Government of Senegal has contributed 5 million Central African Francs ($22,000) to the university, in response to a Unesco General Conference request, last November, for Member States to augment the university endowment fund by voluntary contributions, as well as giving moral and material support.



AÑO INTERNACIONAL
DE LA MUJER 1975

Unesco poster

This Unesco International Women's Year poster is designed by Sonia Delaunay, of France, and was produced in collaboration with the International Association of Art (IAA). It is the first of a series of posters to be produced on Unesco and U.N. themes, including the defence of Human Rights, as a joint Unesco-IAA project called "Artists for Unesco."

Flashes...

■ *Rice-husks and coconuts, sugar-cane fibre and processed garbage are among today's wastes which could become tomorrow's low-cost building materials, suggests a U.N. panel of experts.*

■ *Global eradication of smallpox is very near, says a WHO report. Only 1,400 cases were reported in December 1974 throughout the world, a dramatic decrease of almost 90 per cent on the December 1973 figures.*

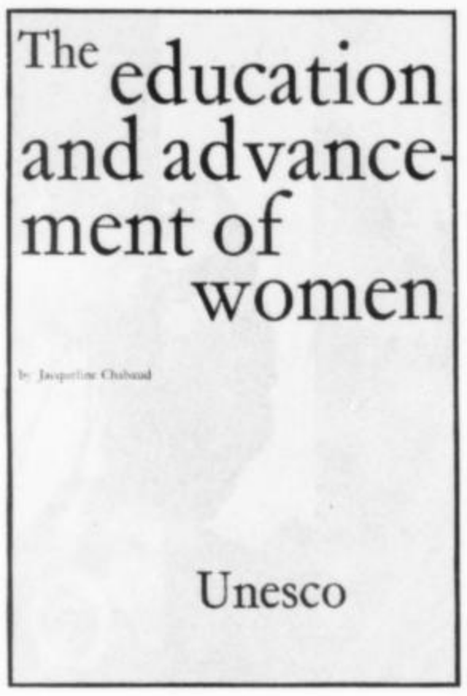
■ *By 1978 the world will face a paper shortage of over 16 million metric tons (10 times the 1974 deficit), says an FAO and U.N. Development Programme study.*

Participate in International Women's Year through the Unesco Gift Coupon Programme.

- **Send for our booklet on rural education projects for young girls and women, sponsored under the Unesco Gift Coupon Programme in Africa, Arab region, Asia and Latin America.**
- **Write direct to : UNESCO, Gift Coupon Office, Place de Fontenoy - 75700 PARIS (France).**

Imp. PRESSES DE L'UNESCO, Paris. — Dépôt légal C.1 — Avril 1975 — IMPRIMÉ EN FRANCE (Printed in France)

The education and advancement of women

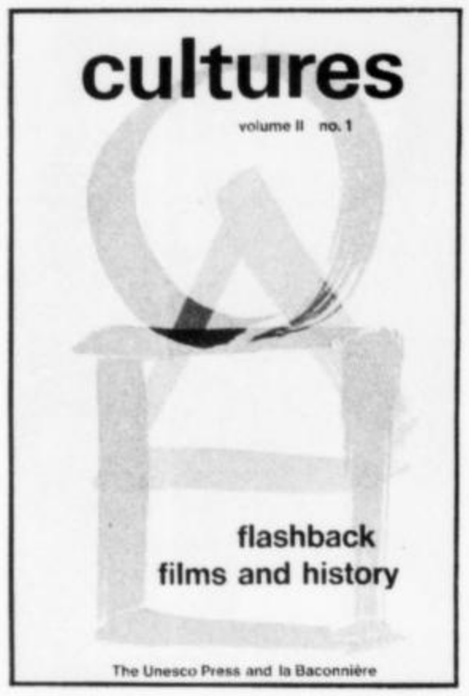


Reprinted on the occasion of International Women's Year 1975, this timely Unesco book by a well-known French writer, Jacqueline Chabaud, examines the global problem of women's access to education, shows how discrimination against women at all levels of education impedes progress and development, and describes what Unesco and other organizations are doing to promote the education of women.

1970, 2nd impression 1974
155 pages 15 French francs

Just published

Flashback: films and history



The film-maker's approach to history is the fascinating theme of this issue of **CULTURES**, Unesco's international quarterly.

■ The popular hero on film ● The Soviet historical film ● Imperial images: the British Empire and monarchy ● Italian cinema, time and history ● Popcorn and Indians: Custer on the screen ● Latin American historical films ● The new Romanian cinema ● Images of Japanese culture.

256 pages, 32 pages of illustrations

■ **CULTURES** is published jointly by Unesco and Les Editions de la Baconnière (Boudry-Neuchatel, Switzerland) in English and French language editions.
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'Equal pay now!'

"Women Unite", "Equal Pay Now", proclaim the posters carried by these British women on the march at a recent national demonstration in London. Their militant spirit echoes that of the British feminist movements which were among the pioneers in the world-wide struggle to win equal rights for women almost a century ago. See pages 8-9: calendar of landmarks in the fight for women's emancipation.

Photo Blye / Paine ©
Camera Press, London